

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

Date	HeadLine	Outlet
01/14/2013	US delays finalizing report linking fracking to water pollution	Reuters - Online
01/14/2013	Deroy Murdock: Despite the movies, environmental experts say fracking is safe New Hampshire OPINION02	Union Leader - Online
01/13/2013	EPA must get fracking test right: editorial	Plain Dealer - Online
01/13/2013	Promised Land's Fracking Fictions: OPEC Goes Hollywood With Crocudrama	Forbes - Online
01/13/2013	DEROY MURDOCK: Regulators find nothing scary about fracking	San Angelo Standard-Times - Online
01/13/2013	Deroy Murdock: Regulators find nothing scary about fracking	Abilene Reporter-News - Online
01/13/2013	A Continuing Wave: The Debate Over Regulation of Fracking Rolls On	Power Magazine - Online
01/13/2013	'Fracking' for gas not something we should fear	Deseret News - Online
01/13/2013	'Fracking' for gas not something we should fear	Deseret News
01/12/2013	Live EPA update today on Fracturing and Produced Water Panel; Energy Water Solutions' Dr. Stewart on EPA frac flowback and produced water panel	Electric Light and Power
01/12/2013	EPA launches consultation on terms of research into fracking	Electric Light and Power
01/12/2013	Vitter: USGS Says Hydraulic Fracturing is Safe in Fayetteville	Electric Light and Power
01/12/2013	US delays finalizing report linking fracking to water pollution	Chicago Tribune - Online
01/12/2013	US delays finalizing report linking fracking to water pollution	CNBC - Online
01/12/2013	US delays finalizing report linking fracking to water pollution	Orlando Sentinel - Online
01/12/2013	Landowner, Encana both object as EPA extends public comment period on Pavillion study 3rd time	Daily Journal - Online
01/12/2013	Murdock: Regulators find nothing scary about fracking	Electric Light and Power
01/12/2013	Column: The fractured thinking of natural gas 'frackophobes'	Eagle-Tribune - Online, The
01/12/2013	Changes at EPA, DOE are expected	Fort Worth Star-Telegram - Online
01/12/2013	Wyoming DEQ outlines plan to address ozone recommendations	Casper Star-Tribune - Online
01/12/2013	Here is the latest Wyoming news from The Associated Press	Associated Press (AP) - Cheyenne Bureau
01/12/2013	Latest Wyoming news, sports, business and entertainment	Associated Press (AP) - Cheyenne Bureau
01/11/2013	EPA extends comment period for Pavillion study	KULR-TV - Online
01/11/2013	EPA again delays Pavillion groundwater	Wyoming Business Report - Online, The

	investigation	
01/11/2013	EPA extends comment period for Pavillion study	Northern Colorado 5 - Online
01/11/2013	Landowner, Encana both object as EPA extends public comment period on Pavillion study 3rd time	Republic - Online, The
01/11/2013	EPA delays Pavillion fracking report	Upstream - Online
01/11/2013	Reaction pours in after Rockefeller announcement	West Virginia Public Broadcasting - Online
01/11/2013	Rockefeller announces he will not run again	West Virginia Public Broadcasting - Online
01/11/2013	New York Fracking Opposition Groups Collect Comments To Give To State Regulators	Huffington Post, The
01/11/2013	Fracking Pollution Nowhere to Be Found	NewsMax - Online
01/11/2013	'Promised Land' offers a false choice on shale development	Politico - Online
01/11/2013	EPA extends comment period for Pavillion study	KGWN-TV - Online
01/11/2013	EPA extends comment period for Pavillion study	WJAC-TV - Online
01/11/2013	'FrackNation' Review: Powerful Response to Anti-Fracking Hysteria	Breitbart.com
01/11/2013	EPA extends comment period for Pavillion study	Seattle Post-Intelligencer
01/11/2013	EPA extends comment period for Pavillion study	San Antonio Express-News - Online
01/11/2013	EPA delaying Pavillion case for 8 months	E&E News PM
01/11/2013	Comment Period on Fracking Study Extended Again	BNA's Daily Environment Report
01/11/2013	EPA Fracking Report Leaves Out Contamination Stats	Occupational Health & Safety - Online
01/11/2013	Live EPA update today on Fracturing and Produced Water Panel; Energy Water Solutions' Dr. Stewart on EPA frac flowback and produced water panel	Money News
01/11/2013	EPA again delays Pavillion groundwater investigation related to fracking	WyoFile
01/11/2013	Opponents Say 'Fracking' Would Carry Risks for Mo.	ENR Midwest - Online
01/11/2013	OSM wants more from state to address coal dams	West Virginia Public Broadcasting - Online
01/11/2013	Sen. Rockefeller to retire after his term ends	West Virginia Public Broadcasting - Online
01/11/2013	Stakeholders react to EPA fracking study, new agency chief	West Virginia Public Broadcasting - Online
01/11/2013	5 reasons natural gas won't save us	Salon.com
01/11/2013	Colorado Oil And Gas Drilling Regulations Receive Initial Approval	Huffington Post, The
01/11/2013	Vitter: USGS Says Hydraulic Fracturing is Safe in Fayetteville	Bignews.biz
01/11/2013	Live EPA update today on Fracturing and Produced Water Panel; Energy Water Solutions' Dr. Stewart on EPA frac flowback and produced water panel	Markets.financialcontent.com
01/11/2013	Live EPA update today on Fracturing and Produced Water Panel; Energy Water Solutions' Dr. Stewart on EPA frac flowback and produced water panel	KAZT-TV - Online
01/11/2013	Live EPA update today on Fracturing and Produced Water Panel; Energy Water Solutions'	WOWK-TV - Online

	Dr. Stewart on EPA frac flowback and produced water panel	
01/11/2013	Murdock: Regulators find nothing scary about fracking	WaterWorld - Online
01/11/2013	Live EPA update today on Fracturing and Produced Water Panel; Energy Water Solutions' Dr. Stewart on EPA frac flowback and produced water panel	WTNZ-TV - Online
01/11/2013	Live EPA update today on Fracturing and Produced Water Panel; Energy Water Solutions' Dr. Stewart on EPA frac flowback and produced water panel	WDSI-TV - Online
01/11/2013	Live EPA update today on Fracturing and Produced Water Panel; Energy Water Solutions' Dr. Stewart on EPA frac flowback and produced water panel	paidContent.org
01/11/2013	5 Reasons Natural Gas Won't Be an Environmental and Economic Savior	AlterNet
01/11/2013	Live EPA update today on Fracturing and Produced Water Panel; Energy Water Solutions' Dr. Stewart on EPA frac flowback and produced water panel	WJSU-TV - Online
01/11/2013	Live EPA update today on Fracturing and Produced Water Panel; Energy Water Solutions' Dr. Stewart on EPA frac flowback and produced water panel	KQCW-TV - Online
01/11/2013	Live EPA update today on Fracturing and Produced Water Panel; Energy Water Solutions' Dr. Stewart on EPA frac flowback and produced water panel	KFMB-AM (760 AM Talk Radio) - Online
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01/11/2013	Live EPA update today on Fracturing and Produced Water Panel; Energy Water Solutions' Dr. Stewart on EPA frac flowback and produced water panel	KNOE-TV - Online
01/11/2013	Live EPA update today on Fracturing and Produced Water Panel; Energy Water Solutions' Dr. Stewart on EPA frac flowback and produced water panel	WSFX-TV - Online
01/11/2013	Live EPA update today on Fracturing and Produced Water Panel; Energy Water Solutions' Dr. Stewart on EPA frac flowback and produced water panel - FOX21- Entertaining Delmarva One Click at a Time	WBOC- TV (DT2 - FOX) - Online
01/11/2013	Live EPA update today on Fracturing and	Indianapolis Business Journal - Online

	Produced Water Panel; Energy Water Solutions' Dr. Stewart on EPA frac flowback and produced water panel	
01/11/2013	Live EPA update today on Fracturing and Produced Water Panel; Energy Water Solutions' Dr. Stewart on EPA frac flowback and produced water panel	KCTV-TV - Online
01/11/2013	Live EPA update today on Fracturing and Produced Water Panel; Energy Water Solutions' Dr. Stewart on EPA frac flowback and produced water panel	SAP Developer's Journal
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01/11/2013	Live EPA update today on Fracturing and Produced Water Panel; Energy Water Solutions' Dr. Stewart on EPA frac flowback and produced water panel	WNEM-TV - Online
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01/11/2013	Live EPA update today on Fracturing and Produced Water Panel; Energy Water Solutions' Dr. Stewart on EPA frac flowback and produced water panel	WFXS-TV - Online
01/11/2013	Live EPA update today on Fracturing and Produced Water Panel; Energy Water Solutions' Dr. Stewart on EPA frac flowback and produced water panel	KOTA-TV - Online
01/11/2013	Deroy Murdock: Who's Afraid of Fracking?	National Review - Online
01/11/2013	Live EPA update today on Fracturing and Produced Water Panel; Energy Water Solutions' Dr. Stewart on EPA frac flowback and produced water panel	SYS-CON Media
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01/11/2013	Regulators find nothing scary about fracking	Reporter - Online, The
01/11/2013	Live EPA update today on Fracturing and Produced Water Panel; Energy Water Solutions' Dr. Stewart on EPA frac flowback and produced water panel	KCOY-TV - Online
01/11/2013	Live EPA update today on Fracturing and Produced Water Panel; Energy Water Solutions' Dr. Stewart on EPA frac flowback and produced water panel	KWTV-TV - Online
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01/11/2013	Live EPA update today on Fracturing and Produced Water Panel; Energy Water Solutions' Dr. Stewart on EPA frac flowback and produced water panel	WTVM-TV - Online
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	Dr. Stewart on EPA frac flowback and produced water panel	
01/11/2013	Live EPA update today on Fracturing and Produced Water Panel; Energy Water Solutions' Dr. Stewart on EPA frac flowback and produced water panel	MarketWatch
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01/11/2013	AGENCIES EXPAND FRACKING RESEARCH PANEL TO ADD HHS, WEIGH GHG IMPACTS	Inside EPA Weekly Report
01/11/2013	EPA extends comment period for Pavillion study	Associated Press (AP) - Cheyenne Bureau
01/11/2013	HOUSE REPUBLICANS CREATE NEW PANELS TO TARGET ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATIONS	Inside EPA Weekly Report
01/11/2013	Live EPA update today on Fracturing and Produced Water Panel; Energy Water Solutions' Dr. Stewart on EPA frac flowback and produced water panel	Associated Press (AP)
01/11/2013	Really frackin' good doc	New York Post
01/10/2013	EPA to release sample results from fracking study	Ithaca Journal - Online
01/10/2013	Lankford to look for efficiencies on energy subcommittee	TMCnet.com
01/10/2013	USGS study finds no water problems in Arkansas fracking	Washington Examiner - Online
01/10/2013	EPA again delays Pavillion groundwater investigation related to fracking	WyoFile
01/10/2013	Environment Chief Resigns	Chemical & Engineering News
01/10/2013	EPA Releases Update on Ongoing Hydraulic Fracturing Study	Rock Products - Online
01/10/2013	Matt Damon's Promised Land Plays to Silly Fracking Stereotypes	U.S. News & World Report
01/10/2013	EPA Releases Update on Ongoing Hydraulic Fracturing Study	Rock Products - Online
01/10/2013	No contamination from fracking found in 2 Arkansas counties-USGS	Chicago Tribune Collections
01/10/2013	Lankford to look for efficiencies on energy subcommittee	energybiz Insider
01/10/2013	Rotary.org:The Rotarian	Rotarian - Online, The
01/10/2013	No contamination from fracking found in 2 Arkansas counties-USGS	Reuters - Online
01/10/2013	Obama 2nd term: managing oil production boom	Worcester Telegram & Gazette - Online

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

US delays finalizing report linking fracking to water pollution

Reuters - Online

Washington, DC

Timothy Gardner

01/14/2013

WASHINGTON Jan 11 (Reuters) - The U.S. government is delaying for 8 months a comment period on a report that offered the first evidence in decades that fracking for natural gas contaminates water supplies.

The stall, the third on the 2011 draft report on water in Wyoming, is the latest example of the federal government delaying conclusions on whether hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, can lead to pollution in water supplies.

The drilling technique has sparked a revolution in domestic drilling that could one day make the country a net gas exporter.

Environmentalists worry fracking can pollute water and air. Drillers deny that and have said Environmental Protection Agency testing methods may have tainted water samples in Pavillion, Wyoming, the region the EPA examined in the report.

The comment period on the EPA report will now last until September 30 to allow residents, industry and local government more time to have their say and for the agency to include new data, an EPA spokeswoman said on Friday.

The report, released by the EPA in December 2011, said the best explanation for the pollution in Pavillion was that fluids used in hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, migrated up from fracking operations and contaminated an aquifer. The chemicals included benzene, alcohols and glycols, it said.

The EPA conducted the report after local residents complained for years about smells and odd tastes in their drinking water drawn from wells near a natural gas field owned by EnCana Corp of Canada.

Environmentalists have said the report confirms their fears. It is the first time since 1987 the government has given evidence that fracking pollutes water supplies. During fracking, companies force large amounts of water, sand and chemicals deep underground to free gas and oil trapped behind rock.

The hot-button topic made its way to Hollywood in December in the movie "Promised Land", with actors Matt Damon and John Krasinski.

In September, the U.S. Geological Survey released raw data on water quality from a well near Pavillion, but did not provide any analysis on the data, leaving the information open to questions.

The EPA said at the time that the data was "generally consistent" with ground water monitoring data at Pavillion that it had previously released.

Encana, which is providing bottled water to about 20 families in Pavillion, blasted the delay. "It's disappointing, there's no credible reason to delay any further," said Doug Hock, an Encana spokesman. The study is a "waste of time and money," he said, adding his company thinks the USGS data showed the water was not contaminated by fracking.

The EPA said in 2011 Wyoming was much more vulnerable than other areas of the country to water contamination from fracking chemicals because drilling there often takes place much closer to the surface than in other states. Wyoming is one of the country's top state producers of natural gas. Output there has suffered recently due to low prices for the fuel.

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

In the recent past, the agency also delayed results on a wider study on fracking's effects on national water supplies until 2014, two years after initial targets it had set. (Reporting by Timothy Gardner; editing by Andrew Hay)

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

**Deroy Murdock: Despite the movies, environmental experts say fracking is safe | New Hampshire OPINION02
Union Leader - Online**

01/14/2013

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Deroy Murdock: Despite the movies, environmental experts say fracking is safe

DEROY MURDOCK

If frackophobes are to be believed, natural-gas fracking is the most frightful environmental nightmare since Japan's Fukushima nuclear-power plant melted down amid an earthquake and tsunami.

In "Promised Land," Matt Damon's new anti-fracking movie - funded by the United Arab Emirates - one character demonstrates this production technique's "dangers" by drenching a toy farm with household chemicals and then setting it ablaze.

In the upcoming pro-fracking film, "Fracknation," (fracknation.com) one Pennsylvania homeowner absurdly claims that fracking polluted his well water with weapons-grade uranium.

In a New Yorkers Against Fracking agitprop poster, the Statue of Liberty furiously topples natural-gas drilling towers with her torch as energy-company 18-wheelers flee in horror.

These warnings might be believable if fracking regulators seemed even slightly worried. Instead, federal and state environmental officials appear positively serene about hydraulic fracturing, a decades-old technology that uses sand and chemically treated water to shatter shale deposits far below the water table and liberate natural gas from the ruptured rocks.

-- "In no case have we made a definitive determination that the fracking process has caused chemicals to enter groundwater," Environmental Protection Agency administrator Lisa Jackson stated last April. In May 2011, she testified on Capitol Hill: "I'm not aware of any proven case where the fracking process itself has affected water."

-- The EPA tested drinking water in Dimock, Pa., which ecologists claim fracking has tainted. "EPA has determined that there are not levels of contaminants present that would require additional action by the Agency," it concluded last July.

-- "A study that examined the water quality of 127 shallow domestic wells in the Fayetteville Shale natural gas production area of Arkansas found no groundwater contamination associated with gas production," the U.S. Geological Survey announced Wednesday.

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

-- "Significant adverse impacts on human health are not expected from routine HVHF," or high-volume hydraulic fracturing, according to a February 2012 preliminary report from New York's Department of Environmental Conservation. Gov. Andrew Cuomo, D-New York, has pondered this issue since 2010 and promises further contemplation, including another draft of what DEC now calls an "outdated summary."

-- "New York would be crazy not to lift the moratorium" against fracking, former Gov. Ed Rendell, D-Pa., told the New York Post in November. The former Democratic National Chairman continued: "I told Gov. Cuomo I would come to testify before any legislative committee. It's a good thing to do."

-- "We have never had any cases of groundwater contamination from hydraulic fracturing," Elizabeth Ames Jones said in 2011. The then-Chairman of the Texas Railroad Commission, which supervises natural gas, added: "It is geologically impossible for fracturing fluid to reach an aquifer a thousand feet above."

-- While California last month unveiled new disclosure and monitoring rules for fracking, State Oil & Gas Supervisor Tim Kustic told the San Jose Mercury News: "There is no evidence of harm from fracking in groundwater in California at this point in time. And it has been going on for many years."

-- "We've used hydraulic fracturing for some 60 years in Oklahoma, and we have no confirmed cases where it is responsible for drinking water contamination - nor do any of the other natural gas-producing states," Corporation Commission Chairman Bob Anthony wrote in August 2010.

-- "In the 41 years that I have supervised oil and gas exploration, production and development in South Dakota, no documented case of water-well or aquifer damage by the fracking of oil or gas wells, has been brought to my attention," said the Department of Environment's Fred Steece. "Nor am I aware of any such cases before my time." Steece commented in a June 2009 New York DEC document that cites regulators from 15 states who identified zero examples of fracking-related water pollution.

The Americans quoted here are neither gas-company executives nor petro-publicists. These are public servants who oversee this industry, and many work or have worked for red-tape-loving Democrats. Nonetheless, they are unafraid of fracking. Thus, frackophobes have nothing to offer but fear itself.

Deroy Murdock is a Fox News Contributor, a nationally syndicated columnist with the Scripps Howard News Service, and a media fellow with the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace at Stanford University.

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

EPA must get fracking test right: editorial Plain Dealer - Online

01/13/2013

By The Plain Dealer Editorial Board

on January 13, 2013 at 8:30 PM, updated January 13, 2013 at 8:32 PM

[View full size A fracking rig in Carroll County. Plain Dealer file](#)

Proponents of hydraulic fracturing say that as long as wells are drilled and encased properly at the wellhead, there is no danger of groundwater contamination. Yet as such drilling proliferates in Ohio and elsewhere, citizens understandably worry about contaminants getting into wells or the heavy freshwater needs of "frackers" depleting local groundwater resources.

The process generally involves injecting copious amounts of chemical-laden water to fracture deeply buried shale and then disposing of the millions of gallons of tainted wastewater in deep-injection wells. Frackers aren't usually required to reveal the exact formulations of their chemicals in advance or to pre-test wells at a distance from the wellhead, inducing some communities to consider paying for expensive benchmark testing of groundwater themselves.

One problem in resolving these concerns has been the dearth of credible, national studies. Fortunately, at congressional direction, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is in the early stages of a major, peer-reviewed investigation of fracking's possible impact on drinking water resources. The EPA aims to release a draft report by the end of 2014.

The study is getting generally favorable marks from industry and environmental groups, but The Associated Press reported last week that EPA was limiting the scope of its study because it "hasn't found a drilling company to partner with to test groundwater around a drilling site," forcing it to rely on computer simulations that "won't be able to address the likelihood of contamination" during actual field operations.

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- Send a letter to the editor, which will be considered for print publication.
- Email general questions or comments about the editorial board to Elizabeth Sullivan, editor of the editorial page.

However, an EPA official contacted by this editorial board said a drilling partner has been found -- although it couldn't be announced yet -- and is looking for the right drilling sites.

The EPA's findings will be critical. Drillers are leasing hundreds of thousands of acres in Ohio, Pennsylvania and other states that sit above the oil-and-gas-rich Utica shale.

Ohioans appreciate the money that the shale boom has brought and its potential to revive the state's manufacturing economy, but they also need to know whether drilling is safe for the environment and whether it can be made safer still.

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

The questions raised can be resolved only by a hard look in the real world.

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing -

Jan. 10 to 14

Promised Land's Fracking Fictions: OPEC Goes Hollywood With Crocudrama **Forbes - Online**

01/13/2013

It seems like nothing sells better in Hollywood than a scary story about beleaguered residents of a rural community battling villainous, greedy energy capitalists bent upon ravaging their environment in reckless disregard for public safety. If this tried-and-true scripting stereotype holds, Matt Damon's new film "Promised Land" should be a blockbuster.

Never mind that the whole theme was based upon unsubstantiated claims, or that the movie was financed in part by a company that is wholly-owned by the government of the United Arab Emirates, an OPEC member that has lots of oily skin in the game. Who's to tell the audience about such trifling details?

Well actually, some word has gotten out after all...enough information, at least, to provoke the producers to make a hasty last-ditch script revision after production had already begun. The original inspiration for the film apparently came from a bogus claim that hydraulic oil and gas fracturing operations (or "fracking") in Dimock, Pennsylvania had contaminated water wells of 11 families.

After the State of Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PDEP) investigated and its scientists found nothing wrong, the families insisted that the EPA get involved. They then investigated also, and came to the same conclusion. EPA Regional Administrator Shawn M. Garvin summed this up, stating: "The sampling and an evaluation of the particular circumstances at each home did not indicate levels of contaminants that would give EPA reason to take further action. Throughout EPA's work in Dimock, the Agency has used the best available scientific data to provide clarity to Dimock residents and address their concerns about the safety of their drinking water."

In fact, the EPA study involved two different rounds of investigation. The first occurred in late 2011, when EPA surveyed residents regarding their private wells and reviewed hundreds of pages of drinking water data supplied to the agency by Dimock residents and PDEP, along with records from Cabot Oil and Gas Exploration which had been accused of creating a problem. Since data from some homes showed elevated contaminant levels and several residents expressed concern, EPA determined that well sampling was necessary to gather additional data and evaluate whether those residents had access to safe drinking water.

Then, between January and June 2012, EPA sampled drinking water wells serving 64 homes. Repeated sampling was conducted at four wells where EPA was delivering temporary water supplies as a precautionary step in response to prior data indicating levels of contaminants that potentially posed a health concern. At one of those wells they found an elevated level of manganese in the untreated water. The two residences served by the well now have water treatment systems that can reduce manganese to levels that do not present a health concern.

Overall, the EPA found naturally-occurring hazardous substances, specifically arsenic, barium or manganese, in well water at five homes, and in all cases, residents now have, or will have, their own treatment systems to reduce concentrations to acceptable tap water safety levels.

Not eager to concede a bad villain story theme gone flat, another anti-fracking filmmaker, Josh Fox who created "Gasland", along with actor Mark Ruffalo, still went ahead and arranged a protest event in Dimock anyway. Gasland featured a dramatic scene where Fox lit a glass of water on fire and attributed it to fracking. Still another documentary filmmaker, Phelim McAleer, challenged that Fox was aware of instances decades ago where tap water could be lit, confronting him with a 1976 report that there was a "troublesome amount of methane in the aquifer." Fox replied: "Well I don't care about reports from 1976. There were reports from 1936 that people say they can light their water on fire in New York State"...claiming that it had "no bearing on the issue."

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

No doubt about it...burning tap water makes for impressive visual effects! Steve Lipsky proved this when he made a video showing flames shooting out of his hose. The Lipsky home in Parker County, Texas sits atop an area in the vicinity of horizontal fracking lines from two gas wells about a mile below the surface. After reporting concern about contamination, water quality tests performed by the Texas Railroad Commission found naturally-occurring levels of benzene, a known carcinogen, which exceeded the threshold limit for drinking water, but found no evidence to support a flaming water claim.

In October 2010, the EPA sampled water and gas from Lipsky's well, and also took samples from two gas wells owned by Fort Worth-based Range Resources near his home. Then, on December 2, 2010, EPA regional administrator Al Armenendariz sent an e-mail to anti-fracking blogger Sharon Wilson (known as "Texas Sharon"), Tom "Smitty" Smith of Public Citizen and others, exclaiming "We're about to make a lot of news."

If the name Al Armendariz sounds familiar, you may remember him as the EPA administrator from the Region 6 office in Dallas who famously boasted on a video that he sought to "crucify" oil and gas companies. He explained that his approach was "kind of like how the Romans used to conquer little villages in the Mediterranean. They'd go into a little Turkish town somewhere, and they'd find the first five guys they saw and they'd crucify them." He continued, "And then you know that town was really easy to manage for the next few years. And so you make examples out of people who are in this case not compliant with the law. Find people who are not compliant with the law, and you hit them as hard as you can and you make examples out of them, and there's a deterrent effect here."

Over the Railroad Commission's protests, the EPA issued a rare order derived from its authority under the Safe Drinking Act, declaring that Range's wells had endangered the health of Lipsky and his neighbor, Rick Hayley, ordering the company to survey all private water wells within a 3,000-foot radius of its gas wells; provide replacement water; identify the contamination pathways to Lipsky's well; and stop them.

As planned, the order made national headlines.

In June 2011, the Lipsky's sued the developer of Silverado-on-the-Brazos and Range Resources in a Parker County district court for contaminating their well, and they hired petroleum engineer and former Texas Railroad Commission hearing examiner Buddy Richter to provide expertise. Another petroleum engineer, John McBeath, argued that integrity tests of the casing and cement lining in Range's wells which were designed to keep fracking fluid and gas from the aquifer proved there were no leaks. He also added that another shallow well drilled at around the same time as Lipsky's some 900 feet away, hit gas immediately. And even before that, a nearby public water system, Lake County Acres, had signs on its water tanks that read "No Open Flame", dating back to about 1995... before Range drilled either of its wells.

According to reports, a water well drilled on Lipsky's neighboring property had penetrated a natural gas-bearing formation called the Strawn which may have created a conduit for gas weeping into Lipsky's well. The chemistry of the shallow Strawn gas formation was nearly identical to the gas in Lipsky's well, with higher nitrogen levels than that found in the much deeper Barnett Shale gas. In fact, the EPA's own geochemist had warned that gas-bearing formations other than Barnett shale needed to be ruled out before the agency fingered Range.

Range filed a countersuit against Steve Lipsky, seeking \$4.2 million in actual damages, plus unspecified punitive damages for legal costs and damage to its reputation. In February 2012, Texas State District Judge Trey Loftin denied a motion by Lipsy and his environmental consultant, Alisa Rich, to dismiss the counterclaim. Judge Loktin's order expressed concern that Lipsky, "under the advice or direction" of Rich, had attached a hose to his water well's gas vent... not to a water line...and then lit the gas from the hose's nozzle. He concluded that "This demonstration was not done for scientific study but to provide local and national news media a deceptive video, calculated to alarm the public into believing the water was burning."

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

In its counterclaim, Range called the video a “gross distortion.” They stated that “The hose pictured...is not a water hose at all, but is used solely for the purpose of venting gas.”

The judge’s decision came as a second blow to Lipsky. Little more than two weeks earlier he had ruled that he did not have jurisdiction to hear the original lawsuit because since the complaint challenged findings of the Railroad Commission, only the Travis County district court in Austin could hear it. The deadline to petition that court had already passed.

Meanwhile, the EPA has backed off in their actions against Range as well. After spending more than a year in federal court attempting to force the company to comply with its endangerment order, it dropped it altogether. In exchange for this concession, Range agreed to sample 20 private water wells surrounding its pad site every three months for a year.

Natural gas infiltration issues aside, the fracking industry continues to encounter objections from activist environmental organizations that challenge the technology. Yet the process has been used successfully without a single documented case of site contamination over more than 60 years. More recent techniques apply horizontal drilling to extend operations into adjacent underground deposits.

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DEROY MURDOCK: Regulators find nothing scary about fracking
San Angelo Standard-Times - Online

01/13/2013

San Angelo Standard Times

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Central, Lake View and area scoreboard

DEROY MURDOCK: Regulators find nothing scary about fracking

Deroy Murdock is a columnist with Scripps Howard News Service and a media fellow with Stanford University's Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace. Contact him at deroy.Murdock@gmail.com.

Posted January 13, 2013 at 6:02 a.m.

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Steece commented in a June 2009 New York DEC document that cites regulators from 15 states who identified zero examples of fracking-related water pollution.

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giddyup writes:

Wow, I can't believe you were able to get that little column published Mr. Murdock but you did a good job. Actually "frackophobia" is believed to be an airborne virus which originated somewhere around the San Francisco, California area about the time that the Barnett Shale exploration era began in the DFW area a several eons ago. Now wait just a minute frackophobes, I am only kidding about frackophobia being an airborne virus. Just take it easy, calm down and go find a tree to hug and you will feel much better.

Comments are the sole responsibility of the person posting them. You agree not to post comments that are off topic, defamatory, obscene, abusive, threatening or an invasion of privacy. Violators may be banned. Click here for our full user agreement .

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Deroy Murdock: Regulators find nothing scary about fracking
Abilene Reporter-News - Online

01/13/2013

Deroy Murdock is a media fellow with the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace at Stanford University. Email him at deroy.Murdock@gmail.com.

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A Continuing Wave: The Debate Over Regulation of Fracking Rolls On Power Magazine - Online

01/13/2013

By Mark P. Fitzsimmons and Rachel S. Tennis

Courtesy: Pavillion Area Concerned Citizens

There seems no end to the commentary on hydraulic fracturing and how it should be regulated. Concerns about fracking's risks to human health and the environment have led to fierce opposition among environmentalists and some localities, recently dramatized in Matt Damon's film "Promised Land," a story about a small American town's fierce opposition to proposed natural gas development played in formulaic Hollywood fashion for maximum good David versus bad Goliath effect. On the other side of the spectrum, fracking's proponents argue that the risks are exaggerated and that such unfounded concerns may interfere with the technology's enormous potential for reinvigorating the U.S. domestic energy market and economy. Industry supporters have pointed to the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) recent study of drinking water in Dimock, Penn. as evidence that the "crusade" against hydraulic fracturing is unwarranted. After residents expressed concern to the agency last year, the EPA conducted two rounds of sampling at four wells and concluded that the water was safe to drink.

Whatever your opinion on fracking, it is clear there will be significant investment and development going forward. Government estimates of U.S. shale gas reserves have increased over the past five years, and some researchers claim that even those increased estimates are grossly understated. In its 2012 Annual Energy Outlook, the Energy Information Administration (EIA) reported that the U.S. has 2,203 trillion cubic feet of technically recoverable natural gas—enough to supply more than 90 years of use at 2011 consumption rates. The EIA also predicts that the U.S. will become a net exporter of natural gas by 2020. A study prepared for America's Natural Gas Alliance predicts that by 2035 the U.S. shale gas industry will support 1.6 million jobs, contribute more than \$231 billion to the GDP, and add \$57 billion in government revenues. Meanwhile, legal and technical barriers could delay shale gas development in other parts of the world for up to a decade. (In the European Union, several countries, such as France and Bulgaria, have passed laws banning fracking.) Particularly in this economic climate, these numbers are impossible to ignore.

How much of this potential will be unlocked ultimately depends on several factors, not least the development and stabilization of a still-uncertain and multilayered regulatory regime. Fracking currently is regulated chiefly at the state level, and industry generally supports continued state-level regulation. In waging its battle against state regulators, the anti-fracking movement has succeeded in persuading local officials to further limit the practice at the municipal level. Many localities have instituted zoning controls or outright bans, though they have had mixed results defending these laws against state constitutional challenges.

Meanwhile, the federal government has shown increasing willingness to regulate fracking. The Obama administration has been cautious initially, focusing largely on research and promoting regulatory efficiency. In April, industry praised President Obama for creating an interagency working group to coordinate efforts among the EPA, the Department of Energy, and the Department of the Interior. At the same time, some federal agencies have begun to exercise their regulatory authority. The Bureau of Land Management's (BLM's) proposed rule for regulating fracking operations on federal lands and the EPA's new Clean Air Act requirements for natural gas wells represent the most significant developments to date. It remains to be seen whether the administration's reelection "mandate" will include stricter controls.

As this complicated regulatory framework continues to develop, it will require careful monitoring by any company reliant on expectations of inexpensive and abundant natural gas. Following our earlier article on U.S. fracking regulation last

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

year, this article provides an update on the significant developments of recent months.

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**'Fracking' for gas not something we should fear
Deseret News - Online**

01/13/2013

About this ad

In this Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2009 file photo, crew members with Anadarko Petroleum Corp., work on a drilling platform on a Weld County farm near Mead, Colo., in the northeastern part of the state.

Associated Press

Summary

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'Fracking' for gas not something we should fear Deseret News

01/13/2013

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EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

**Live EPA update today on Fracturing and Produced Water Panel; Energy Water Solutions' Dr. Stewart on EPA frac flowback and produced water panel
Electric Light and Power**

01/12/2013

David R. Stewart, PhD PE and Chief Science Officer of Energy Water Solutions in Houston Texas was invited to give feedback as an expert member on the Environmental Protection Agency's Frac Flowback and Produced Water Technical Roundtable. The EPA hosts an online update via live webinar on these issues today. Dr. Stewart was invited to Washington DC with other industry experts to meetings on September 15, 2012 of the Hydraulic Fracturing panel which was held at EPA Headquarters. This committee was formed at the request of Congress, and this morning there will be a live online update to "EPA's study of the Potential Impacts of Hydraulic Fracturing on Drinking Water Resources: Flowback and Produced Water Technical Roundtable". Dr. Stewart said, "Congress asked the EPA to study these issues, and our role is to discuss future regulations including using frac flowback and produced water for beneficial use". Dave Stewart has patented technologies and processes that work together for Energy Water Solutions clients to filter frac flowback and produced water and turn it to clean fresh water. This clean water still needs state legislation passed, to be ground discharged in some states for beneficial energy and agricultural uses.

Energy Water Solutions' Dr. Dave Stewart participated in several meetings on expert panels at the invitation of the EPA, to discuss how hydraulic fracturing could affect drinking water resources. Representative energy company participants on this EPA frack water committee include Chesapeake Energy Corporation, Chevron, HighMount, Newfield Energy, Range Resources, Southwestern Energy as well as regulatory officials from the Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining, Wyoming Oil and Gas Conservation Commission, Railroad Commission of Texas and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. You may see the list of expert participants on the frac flowback and produced water panel and their bios at: <http://www.epa.gov/hfstudy/pdfs/flowback-bio.pdf>

The Environmental Protection Agency has scheduled a public webinar for today January 11, 2013 at 9:00 AM Central time as an update to the Hydraulic Fracturing Study progress report. To register for this public webinar please login to: <http://www.cluin.org/conf/tio/FRACJan11/>

Energy Water Solutions is a Houston Texas firm with leadership from energy, water and technology backgrounds from Conoco-Phillips, BP, Accenture, Siemens, Stewart Environmental and SAP. EWS filters produced water for oil and gas producers with scalable water filtration systems close to the well head, immediately lowering production costs and creating incremental fresh water for beneficial use in oil field and agricultural applications.

For a copy of available documents or more information, please contact:

Ed Cowsar, Executive VP Sales and Marketing

Energy Water Solutions

800 Town & Country Boulevard, Suite 300

Houston, TX 77024

512.970.4481

or visit <http://www.energywatersolutions.com>

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

EPA launches consultation on terms of research into fracking Electric Light and Power

01/12/2013

The Environmental Protection Agency has launched a public consultation on the draft terms of reference for research into hydraulic fracturing (fracking).

In May 2012 an EPA-commissioned preliminary study found fracking a drilling method used to extract shale gas does not pose a significant environmental risk , but there are potential risks to ground water from poor well design or construction .

A steering committee comprising Irish and Northern Irish environmental and energy agencies has since developed proposed terms of reference for a comprehensive programme of research into the process.

Interested parties have until March 8th to submit written comments on the draft terms of reference.

According to the EPA, the public consultation will ensure that this programme of research delivers a thorough and robust examination of the issues .

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

Vitter: USGS Says Hydraulic Fracturing is Safe in Fayetteville Electric Light and Power

01/12/2013

The ranking Republican member of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee issued the following news release:

U.S. Senators David Vitter (R-La.) and John Boozman (R-Ark.) made the following statements regarding news from the completed U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) study that examined the water quality of 127 shallow domestic wells in the Fayetteville Shale natural gas production area of Arkansas and found no groundwater contamination associated with gas production.

"The President and his administration have been trying to cripple hydraulic fracturing for years, even though domestic energy production has been one of the only bright spots in our economy, thanks in large part to the utilization of this technology," Vitter said. "It's certainly encouraging to see this positive result from a study using sound and transparent science to draw conclusions instead of ideology. The EPA's mishaps with fabricating evidence in Texas, Pennsylvania, and Wyoming caused an unnecessary attack on an effective, efficient and safe method of developing domestic energy. Studies like these from the USGS help set the record straight."

"Regulatory policies must be based on science, not fear or propaganda. Whether stopping the Keystone pipeline or spreading fear and falsehoods about gas production, the President and EPA seem intent on driving up the cost of energy for American families," Boozman said. "The proper use of our country's vast natural gas reserves will help protect our environment and strengthen our economy. Natural gas use cuts emissions, reduces our dependence on foreign energy, creates jobs, and lowers energy and food costs, especially for low-income families."

Recently Vitter sent a letter to President Obama highlighting how the United Kingdom is moving toward hydraulic fracturing because it works. Click here to read a copy of the letter. <http://1.usa.gov/VRacY6>

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

**US delays finalizing report linking fracking to water pollution
Chicago Tribune - Online**

01/12/2013

WASHINGTON, Jan 11 (Reuters) - The U.S. government is delaying for 8 months a comment period on a report that offered the first evidence in decades that fracking for natural gas contaminates water supplies.

The stall, the third on the 2011 draft report on water in Wyoming, is the latest example of the federal government delaying conclusions on whether hydraulic fracturing, or fracking can lead to pollution in water supplies.

The drilling technique has sparked a revolution in domestic drilling that could one day make the country a net gas exporter.

Environmentalists worry fracking can pollute water and air.

Drillers deny that and have said Environmental Protection Agency testing methods may have tainted water samples in Pavillion, Wyoming, the region the EPA examined in the report.

The comment period on the EPA report will now last until more time to have their say and for the agency to include new data, an EPA spokeswoman said on Friday.

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The comment period on the EPA report will now last until September 30 to allow residents, industry and local government more time to have their say and for the agency to include new data, an EPA spokeswoman said on Friday.

The report, released by the EPA in December 2011, said the best explanation for the pollution in Pavillion was that fluids used in hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, migrated up from fracking operations and contaminated an aquifer. The chemicals included benzene, alcohols and glycols, it said.

The EPA conducted the report after local residents complained for years about smells and odd tastes in their drinking water drawn from wells near a natural gas field owned by EnCana Corp of Canada.

Environmentalists have said the report confirms their fears. It is the first time since 1987 the government has given evidence that fracking pollutes water supplies. During fracking, companies force large amounts of water, sand and chemicals deep underground to free gas and oil trapped behind rock.

The hot-button topic made its way to Hollywood in December in the movie "Promised Land", with actors Matt Damon and John Krasinski.

In September, the U.S. Geological Survey released raw data on water quality from a well near Pavillion, but did not provide any analysis on the data, leaving the information open to questions.

The EPA said at the time that the data was "generally consistent" with ground water monitoring data at Pavillion that it had previously released.

Encana, which is providing bottled water to about 20 families in Pavillion, blasted the delay. "It's disappointing, there's no credible reason to delay any further," said Doug Hock, an Encana spokesman. The study is a "waste of time and money," he said, adding his company thinks the USGS data showed the water was not contaminated by fracking.

The EPA said in 2011 Wyoming was much more vulnerable than other areas of the country to water contamination from fracking chemicals because drilling there often takes place much closer to the surface than in other states. Wyoming is one of the country's top state producers of natural gas. Output there has suffered recently due to low prices for the fuel.

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

In the recent past, the agency also delayed results on a wider study on fracking's effects on national water supplies until 2014, two years after initial targets it had set.

(Reporting by Timothy Gardner; editing by Andrew Hay)

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**US delays finalizing report linking fracking to water pollution
Orlando Sentinel - Online**

01/12/2013

1:49 p.m. EST, January 11, 2013

WASHINGTON, Jan 11 (Reuters) - The U.S. government is delaying for 8 months a comment period on a report that offered the first evidence in decades that fracking for natural gas contaminates water supplies.

The stall, the third on the 2011 draft report on water in Wyoming, is the latest example of the federal government delaying conclusions on whether hydraulic fracturing, or fracking can lead to pollution in water supplies.

The drilling technique has sparked a revolution in domestic drilling that could one day make the country a net gas exporter.

Environmentalists worry fracking can pollute water and air.

Drillers deny that and have said Environmental Protection Agency testing methods may have tainted water samples in Pavillion, Wyoming, the region the EPA examined in the report.

The comment period on the EPA report will now last until more time to have their say and for the agency to include new data, an EPA spokeswoman said on Friday.

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

**Landowner, Encana both object as EPA extends public comment period on Pavillion study
3rd time
Daily Journal - Online**

01/12/2013

CASPER, Wyoming — The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has once again extended the public comment period for its study of groundwater pollution in a central Wyoming gas field.

The comment period for the EPA investigation in Pavillion was scheduled to end Tuesday but has been extended until Sept. 30. The comment period was extended twice last year.

The EPA theorized over a year ago that hydraulic fracturing may have played a role in the pollution. The federal agency says the longer comment period will allow more time for people to weigh in on the testing.

The Casper Star-Tribune reports both a landowner with contaminated groundwater and the owner of the Pavillion gas field, Encana Oil and Gas, object to extending the comment period. Both sides say they want the studies to wrap up.

Information from: Casper (Wyo.) Star-Tribune, <http://www.trib.com>

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Murdock: Regulators find nothing scary about fracking Electric Light and Power

01/12/2013

Murdock: Regulators find nothing scary about fracking

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If frackophobes are to be believed, natural gas fracking is the most frightful environmental nightmare since Japan's Fukushima nuclear power plant melted down after an earthquake and tsunami.

In "Promised Land," Matt Damon's new anti-fracking movie -- funded in part by the United Arab Emirates -- one character demonstrates this production technique's "dangers" by drenching a toy farm with household chemicals and then setting it ablaze.

In the upcoming pro-fracking film, "Fracknation," one Pennsylvania homeowner absurdly claims that fracking polluted his well water with weapons-grade uranium.

In a New Yorkers Against Fracking agitprop poster, the Statue of Liberty furiously topples natural gas drilling towers with her torch as energy company 18-wheelers flee in horror.

These warnings might be believable if fracking regulators seemed even slightly worried. Instead, federal and state environmental officials appear positively serene about hydraulic fracturing, a decades-old technology that uses sand and chemically treated water to shatter shale deposits far below the water table and liberate natural gas from the ruptured rocks.

-- "In no case have we made a definitive determination that the fracking process has caused chemicals to enter groundwater," Environmental Protection Agency administrator Lisa Jackson said last April. In May 2011, she testified on Capitol Hill: "I'm not aware of any proven case where the fracking process itself has affected water."

The EPA tested drinking water in Dimock, Pa., which ecologists claim fracking has tainted. "EPA has determined that there are not levels of contaminants present that would require additional action by the agency," it concluded last July.

-- "A study that examined the water quality of 127 shallow domestic wells in the Fayetteville Shale natural gas production area of Arkansas found no groundwater contamination associated with gas production," the U.S. Geological Survey announced Wednesday.

-- "Significant adverse impacts on human health are not expected from routine HVHF," or high-volume hydraulic fracturing, according to a February 2012 preliminary report from New York's Department of Environmental Conservation. New York Democratic Gov. Andrew Cuomo has pondered this issue since 2010 and promises further contemplation, including another draft of what DEC now calls an "outdated summary."

"New York would be crazy not to lift the moratorium" against fracking, former Pennsylvania Gov. Ed Rendell, a Democrat, told the New York Post in November. The former Democratic national chairman continued: "I told Gov. Cuomo I would come to testify before any legislative committee ... It's a good thing to do."

-- "We have never had any cases of groundwater contamination from hydraulic fracturing," Elizabeth Ames Jones said in 2011. The then-Chairman of the Texas Railroad Commission, which supervises natural gas, added: "It is geologically

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impossible for fracturing fluid to reach an aquifer a thousand feet above."

-- While California last month unveiled new disclosure and monitoring rules for fracking, State Oil & Gas Supervisor Tim Kustic told the San Jose Mercury News: "There is no evidence of harm from fracking in groundwater in California at this point in time. And it has been going on for many years."

-- "We've used hydraulic fracturing for some 60 years in Oklahoma, and we have no confirmed cases where it is responsible for drinking water contamination -- nor do any of the other natural gas-producing states," Corporation Commission Chairman Bob Anthony wrote in August 2010.

-- "In the 41 years that I have supervised oil and gas exploration, production and development in South Dakota, no documented case of water-well or aquifer damage by the fracking of oil or gas wells, has been brought to my attention," said the Department of Environment's Fred Steece. "Nor am I aware of any such cases before my time." Steece commented in a June 2009 New York DEC document that cites regulators from 15 states who identified zero examples of fracking-related water pollution.

The Americans quoted here are neither gas company executives nor natural gas publicists. These are public servants who oversee this industry, and many work or have worked for red-tape-loving Democrats. Nonetheless, they are unafraid of fracking. Thus, frackophobes have nothing to offer but fear itself.

(Deroy Murdock is a columnist with Scripps Howard News Service and a media fellow with the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace at Stanford University. Email him at deroy.Murdock@gmail.com)

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

**Column: The fractured thinking of natural gas 'frackophobes'
Eagle-Tribune - Online, The**

01/12/2013

Deroy Murdock The Eagle-Tribune

If frackophobes are to be believed, natural gas fracking is the most frightful environmental nightmare since Japan's Fukushima nuclear power plant melted down after an earthquake and tsunami.

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EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

**Changes at EPA, DOE are expected
Fort Worth Star-Telegram - Online**

01/12/2013

Four years ago, President Barack Obama said his energy and environmental advisers would work to develop a "new hybrid economy" based on wind, solar and other renewable energy sources.

Now Lisa Jackson has announced her exit as head of the Environmental Protection Agency, and Energy Secretary Steven Chu, who faced congressional criticism over green-energy programs, could follow. Obama may end up assembling a second-term team for a different task: how to manage the boom in U.S. production of oil and natural gas.

"When the Obama team came in the first go-around, there was great hope that the president would be transformative and really try to shift the energy policy much more heavily towards renewables," said Charles Ebinger, an energy policy expert at the Brookings Institution in Washington.

Instead, the growth of hydraulic fracturing to drill for oil and gas in shale rock formations, such as the Barnett Shale in North Texas, is offering a "unique opportunity to revitalize the American economy and reinvigorate American manufacturing," Ebinger said.

Oil production is at the highest in 15 years, and natural gas development is at record levels. That pushed prices down to a decade low last year, enticing chemical companies that rely on natural gas to build new factories in the U.S.

"The whole paradigm has shifted over the last four years," said Stephen Brown, a lobbyist for Tesoro Corp., based in San Antonio. The administration needs to "figure out how not to get in the way of this," he said.

Ebinger said Obama should pick an energy secretary who can explain the benefits offered by natural gas development to a skeptical public.

"He needs a couple of people at the top who can go out and sell the message that we really are at a situation now where we can reduce our oil import dependency if we move to develop these unconventional resources," he said. "I think he needs a salesman or a saleswoman."

On the other side are environmentalists who want the U.S. to adopt stricter regulations to protect water resources and limit air pollution from fracking.

The Interior Department is developing the first rules for the drilling practice on federal lands to address some of those concerns as it also promotes oil and gas development as a source of economic growth.

The EPA, meanwhile, plans to release its multiyear analysis of the risks of fracking in 2014. Margot Anderson, the executive director of the Energy Project at the Bipartisan Policy Center, a Washington-based group that says it promotes legislative consensus, said that study will probably determine what level of regulatory restrictions on fracking the administration will pursue in the next term.

The oil industry hopes Obama chooses candidates who "are well versed in how an agency operates and what the agency is capable of doing," Brown said.

The emphasis for Obama's new energy and environmental team appears to be on seasoned insiders who understand the politics of rulemaking and how to negotiate with diverse constituencies. Washington Gov. Christine Gregoire, whose term

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ends next week, is a candidate to replace Jackson at the EPA,

seattlepi.com reported on its Web site, citing a "very private prediction from a very senior source in Washington's congressional delegation."

Gregoire won praise from environmental groups such as the Ocean Conservancy for commissioning a report on the risks of ocean acidification, a consequence of climate change, last year.

Other candidates for the EPA include Bob Perciasepe, the agency's No. 2 official; Gina McCarthy, the assistant administrator of EPA for air pollution; and Kathleen McGinty, the former top environmental regulator for Pennsylvania, according to published reports.

The EPA's new administrator will largely be responsible for implementing regulations already in the works, including a series of final or proposed rules that will curb the use of coal to generate electricity.

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

Wyoming DEQ outlines plan to address ozone recommendations Casper Star-Tribune - Online

01/12/2013

Wyoming DEQ outlines plan to address ozone recommendations

2013-01-11T21:00:00Z 2013-01-11T20:02:38Z Wyoming DEQ outlines plan to address ozone recommendations

By ADAM VOGEL

Star-Tribune energy reporter

trib.com

Wyoming's environmental regulators plan to fully adopt a list of measures to fight the Pinedale area's air pollution problem within the next two years, but that may not be soon enough for some people.

The Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality on Thursday night outlined its plan to explore and implement a plan of action to fight ozone, a toxic gas which has for years exceeded federal standards in the area, and is caused by natural gas drilling operations in the area.

The plan was submitted late last year by the Upper Green River Basin Air Quality Citizens Advisory Task Force — a group of residents, local and state officials and industry representatives — some of whom said Friday they weren't happy with how quickly change is likely to come.

Elaine Crumpley, a Pinedale resident and president of the grassroots organization Citizens United for Responsible Energy Development, or CURED, said she wasn't entirely pleased with the DEQ's presentation.

"My sense is that they have an awful lot of work to do that's a long-term process, and they haven't even started it yet," she said. "The only concrete action they've started is on things that are basically already in place."

Among the group's recommendations were to create new laws to limit emissions from natural gas operations in the nearby Jonah and Pinedale Anticline fields and to create contingency plans for days in which pollutants are expected to be high. The agency plans to pursue each, although some will take more time than others.

Crumpley wasn't alone in asking whether the changes would come soon enough. Mike Saffron is an environmental engineer with Encana Oil and Gas, which owns the nearby Jonah Field. He said he wasn't surprised by the agency's plan, but got the impression some members of the group felt they weren't high enough on the state agency's priority list.

"I think they recognized that (the recommendations) are important, but we're not the only people asking them to do things," he said. "The feeling we got is we really wish we were more important than we appeared to be and that things could be expedited."

Wyoming DEQ spokesman Keith Guille said Friday that the department is already undertaking efforts to adopt rules wherever possible, although some will take patience.

"The ultimate goal has always been to bring the ozone levels down and bring the area back" into compliance, he said. "This group put together recommendations — we're attempting to tie those to the process."

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

Others contacted Friday were fairly happy with the agency's willingness to take on multiple recommendations.

"I think they did a good job by taking the task force's recommendations and trying to implement them," said Andy Nelson, a Sublette County commissioner. "The thing I liked was they gave us short-term, mid-term and long-term implementation goals."

Carla McKee, an environmental and regulatory manager for Ultra Petroleum, which has operations in the area, said she thought the agency did well to address all of the issues. Representatives from Shell Oil and QEP Resources, both also active in the basin, didn't return calls Friday.

Levels of ozone — a toxic gas — have been especially high in the area, exceeding limits from 2008 to 2011. The ozone problem is compounded primarily in February and March, when rising warm air can trap the pollutant in the basin, an area surrounded by mountains. Such conditions occur only a few days per year. The state has three years to bring the area back within defined limits.

The task force began meeting in February, the result of a recommendation by Gov. Matt Mead. The group comprised 26 individuals. In September, they released a list of 11 possible solutions to the area's ozone problem.

The DEQ reviewed each recommendation and split the list into three categories, based on time required for implementation.

The category likely to be implemented earliest includes encouraging companies to create contingency plans for high ozone days, creating a new control technology standard for gas leaks, crafting a research plan into emissions given off by evaporation ponds and improving ways emissions are monitored and reported.

The second group — measures which would require rule changes — include new rules reducing emissions from stationary oil and gas equipment and developing an eventual regulatory framework for reducing emission from evaporating ponds. The agency will also continue to encourage companies to voluntarily reduce emissions.

Only two measures — one which would create regulations limiting emissions from drill rigs, another doing the same for engines used in hydraulic fracturing — are not in the agency's jurisdiction. Guille said such rules would have to be created by the Environmental Protection Agency.

While attempting to implement the recommendations, the agency will also undertake other work to mitigate emissions. As part of the effort to bring basin air back into compliance, the state must craft an emissions inventory plan and submit it to the EPA sometime this year.

Nelson said he wouldn't expect every member of the diverse task force to be happy with the DEQ's plan, but the agency came close.

"I think we got as close to getting 25 differing opinions to consensus as you can," he said. "If you could get all of those people and make them all happy, boy, you better patent that and start selling it."

Reach energy reporter Adam Voge at 307-266-0561, or at adam.voge@trib.com. Read his blog at <http://trib.com/news/opinion/blogs/boom> or follow him on Twitter @vogeCST.

Recommendations

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

**Here is the latest Wyoming news from The Associated Press
Associated Press (AP) - Cheyenne Bureau**

01/12/2013

CHEYENNE, Wyo. _The city-county health departments in Wyoming's two largest communities are out of the flu vaccine at what may be the peak of this year's nasty flu season. Cheyenne-Laramie County and Cheyenne-Laramie County health departments are tapped out, but many clinics and retail stores still have the inoculation. State health officials say this is the worst flu season in three years but there are signs it may have peaked in Wyoming.

CASPER, Wyo. (AP) _ The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has again extended the public comment period for its study of groundwater pollution in a central Wyoming gas field. The public will have until Sept. 30 to submit comments on the EPA investigation in Pavillion. The EPA theorized over a year ago that hydraulic fracturing may have played a role in the pollution.

CODY, Wyo. (AP) _ A Montana man charged with kidnapping and assaulting an 11-year-old Wyoming girl is facing new felony charges. The Billings Gazette reports 40-year-old Jesse Paul Speer was charged with aggravated assault and sexual abuse of a minor after a court hearing. He was initially charged with kidnapping, aggravated assault and a weapons count after his October arrest.

LARAMIE, Wyo. (AP) _ The NCAA has denied granting another year of eligibility to senior Wyoming safety Luke Ruff. UW had requested a medical hardship waiver for Ruff, who played in five games last season before an injury forced him to miss the rest of the season. Ruff finishes his career at UW with 175 career tackles.

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EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

**Latest Wyoming news, sports, business and entertainment
Associated Press (AP) - Cheyenne Bureau**

01/12/2013

FLU-WYOMING

Wyo health depts out of vaccine at flu season peak

CHEYENNE, Wyo. (AP) _ The city-county health departments in Wyoming's two largest communities are out of influenza vaccine at what may be the peak of this year's nasty flu season.

Health officials in Laramie County said Friday they don't expect to get more from the vaccine manufacturers, but that doesn't mean the flu situation is dire in southeast Wyoming.

They say the Cheyenne-Laramie County Health Department had a successful flu vaccine campaign that immunized some 4,000 people. That's not counting those who got immunized at clinics and retail stores, and many of those locations still have vaccine.

The Casper-Natrona County Health Department also is out of flu vaccine.

State health officials say this is the worst flu season in three years but there are signs that flu season may have peaked in Wyoming.

WYOMING ABDUCTION

Man accused in Wyo. abduction faces 3 new charges

CODY, Wyo. (AP) _ A Montana man charged with kidnapping and assaulting an 11-year-old girl from Wyoming is facing new felony charges.

The Billings Gazette reports 40-year-old Jesse Paul Speer was charged with aggravated assault and sexual abuse of a minor in the first and second degree after a court hearing.

He was initially charged after his arrest in October with kidnapping, aggravated assault and using a gun in the commission of a felony. He had pleaded not guilty to those charges.

Speer is being held in Cody, Wyo., with bond set at \$2 million.

He is accused of abducted the girl in Cody in early October. Authorities say he sexually assaulted her before releasing her. Hunters later found her and took her to safety.

Speer previously lived in Colorado.

SCHOOLS SUPERINTENDENT

Wyoming Senate panels advance schools' chief bill

CHEYENNE, Wyo. (AP) _ A proposed bill to drastically reduce the administrative role of Wyoming's top state public

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

schools official has cleared two state Senate committees.

On Friday, the Senate Education Committee unanimously approved Senate File 104, and the Senate Appropriations Committee followed with a 4-1 endorsement. The bill now goes to the full Senate for debate.

A proposal would remove the Wyoming superintendent of public instruction as head of the state Department of Education. It would create a new director of the agency who would be appointed by the governor.

Superintendent Cindy Hill spoke against the bill Friday, saying the proposal would take away the voice of the people who elected her and replace it with a bureaucrat.

Supporters say it would help take the political dysfunction out of state education.

TOURISM PROMOTION

Some in Jackson upset about proposed tourism cut

(Information in the following story is from: KCWY-TV, <http://www.kcwy13.com>)

CASPER, Wyo. (AP) _ Some business owners and tourism officials in Jackson are worried about a proposal to cut more than \$1 million from the state's tourism budget.

Business owner Stephen Price told KCWY-TV that the governor's proposed cut could affect the number of people visiting Jackson Hole and, ultimately, how many people are employed in tourism-related businesses.

Jackson Hole Chamber of Commerce director Jeff Golightly said Wyoming needs to stay competitive with surrounding states like Colorado and Montana in trying to attract tourists.

Last year, the Jackson Hole Travel and Tourism Board spent over \$2 million to try to lure visitors to the area.

RADIOACTIVE WASTE

Bill to allow radioactive waste storage advances

CHEYENNE, Wyo. (AP) _ A bill to permit construction of temporary, high-level radioactive waste storage facilities in Wyoming has cleared a committee vote.

The Senate Minerals, Business and Economic Development Committee on Friday recommended approval of a bill to allow construction of temporary, high-level waste storage facilities.

The storage facilities would only be allowed if they stored waste produced by a nuclear power generation facility operating within the state.

There are no such nuclear plants operating in Wyoming now. The chairmen of both the Senate and House Minerals Committees said they're not aware of any immediate plans to construct them.

FRACKING-GROUNDWATER POLLUTION

EPA extends comment period for Pavillion study

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

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CASPER, Wyo. (AP) _ The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has once again extended the public comment period for its study of groundwater pollution in a central Wyoming gas field.

The comment period for the EPA investigation in Pavillion was scheduled to end Tuesday but has been extended until Sept. 30. The comment period was extended twice last year.

The EPA theorized over a year ago that hydraulic fracturing may have played a role in the pollution. The federal agency says the longer comment period will allow more time for people to weigh in on the testing.

The Casper Star-Tribune reports both a landowner with contaminated groundwater and the owner of the Pavillion gas field, Encana Oil and Gas, object to extending the comment period. Both sides say they want the studies to wrap up.

DEER POACHING

Litter leads to poaching charges

(Information in the following story is from: Casper (Wyo.) Star-Tribune, <http://www.trib.com>)

PINEDALE, Wyo. (AP) _ Wyoming Game and Fish Department investigators have charged two men with poaching deer after linking trash found at the scene of the crime to them.

The two buck deer were found on winter range near Big Sandy in southwest Wyoming last month.

Pinedale warden Jordan Kraft was able to trace a discarded energy drink and chewing tobacco can to two suspects. Kraft then found missing parts of the poached deer and other evidence behind one suspect's house in Moorcroft.

State Chief Game Warden Brian Nesvik tells the Casper Star-Tribune that poaching crimes on the winter range in southwest Wyoming are treated as a high priority in part because deer are in the middle of their rut, often near roads and vulnerable.

WYOMING-RUFF

NCAA denies extra year to UW's Ruff

LARAMIE, Wyo. (AP) _ The NCAA has denied granting another year of eligibility to senior Wyoming safety Luke Ruff.

UW had requested a medical hardship waiver for Ruff, who played in five games last season before an injury forced him to miss the rest of the season.

However, the NCAA denied UW's request and subsequent appeal.

Ruff finishes his career at UW with 175 career tackles

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EPA extends comment period for Pavillion study KULR-TV - Online

01/11/2013

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EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

EPA again delays Pavillion groundwater investigation Wyoming Business Report - Online, The

01/11/2013

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has again delayed action in its highly controversial investigation into contaminated drinking water in Pavillion, Wyoming.

WyoFile yesterday obtained a document scheduled to be published in the Federal Register today, announcing the extension of the public comment period for EPA Region 8's "Investigation of Ground Water Contamination near Pavillion, Wyoming" to September 30, 2013.

Public comment was first initiated in December 2011.

That draft report, released publicly in December 2011, alleged that chemicals commonly associated with hydraulic fracturing — or "fracking" — indeed contributed to contaminated drinking water in the tiny, rural farming community.

The report set off a firestorm of criticism from both Wyoming officials and Pavillion natural gas field operator Encana Oil & Gas USA, taking aim at the EPA's methodology, data and conclusions. In the controversy, a scientific peer review required to finalize the draft report has been continually delayed.

This week's news of yet another delay further frustrated stakeholders on all sides of the issue, including some Pavillion area residents who believe the EPA's investigation — and conclusions mentioned in the draft report — is the most reliable information on the matter.

"What it really means for us is months and months of waiting and still being exposed to impacts that we've suffered all along and having no resolution," Pavillion area rancher John Fenton told WyoFile. "Go ahead and extend public comment, but allow the peer review go forward. ... I'm trying to find out who requested this."

A spokesman for Encana Oil & Gas USA said the company was equally disappointed.

"This issue goes to our reputation and we take this very seriously and we don't believe the issues in Pavillion are related to our oil and gas operation," Encana spokesman Doug Hock told WyoFile. "It's a disservice to us and a disservice to people of Pavillion and to the state of Wyoming."

Hock said Encana had prepared several third-party reports from geologists, hydrologists and other experts to submit to EPA next week. The reports essentially are a critique of EPA's groundwater investigation, which Encana believes has been proven scientifically invalid.

That question of validity, however, cannot be officially answered until — and unless — a peer review weighs in on the matter.

The EPA issued this statement today: "During this time EPA will continue its public outreach activities, including meeting with key stakeholders and posting additional technical information on the agency's website. This extension will allow the public additional opportunity to comment on EPA's draft report and the latest round of sampling conducted by EPA and USGS. The agency will take into account new data, further stakeholder input and public comment as it continues to review the status of the Pavillion investigation and considers options for moving forward."

In the meantime, dozens of families are left without answers as to why their drinking water is fouled.

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

"We have all this work and it's not being allowed to continue on through this peer review process and come to some conclusion," Fenton said.

The state has pitched in money to provide cisterns as a temporary fix, although few homeowners have committed to having them installed because they still have to pay for water. The state has also launched planning efforts for a long-term water supply solution.

Encana is still providing some water on a temporary basis. The company continues to operate about 145 natural gas wells in the Pavillion field, and says it has not performed any drilling or fracking operations since 2007. This past year, a potential buyer backed out of negotiations to purchase the field.

"That buyer decided, because of the ongoing issues with EPA, decided not to go through with that transaction," said Hock. "It's not a core asset for us."

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

EPA extends comment period for Pavillion study Northern Colorado 5 - Online

01/11/2013

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Information from: Casper (Wyo.) Star-Tribune, <http://www.trib.com>

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EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

EPA delays Pavillion fracking report Upstream - Online

01/11/2013

Delayed: EPA to wait another eight months to finalise Pavillion fracking report

The US government is delaying for eight months a comment period on a report that offered the first evidence in decades that hydraulic fracturing contaminates water supplies.

The stall, the third on the 2011 draft report on water in Pavillion, Wyoming, is the latest example of the federal government delaying conclusions on whether fracking can lead to water contamination, as some environmentalists have claimed.

Drillers have said Environmental Protection Agency testing methods in Pavillion may have tainted water samples.

The comment period on the EPA report will now last until 30 September to allow residents, industry and local government more time to have their say and for the agency to include new data, an EPA spokeswoman told Reuters on Friday.

The report, released by the EPA in December 2011, said the best explanation for the pollution in Pavillion was that fracking fluids migrated from wells and contaminated an aquifer. The chemicals included benzene, alcohols and glycols, it said.

The EPA conducted the report after local residents complained for years about smells and odd tastes in their drinking water drawn from wells near a natural gas field owned by EnCana of Canada.

Environmentalists have said the report confirms their fears. It is the first time since 1987 the government has given evidence that fracking pollutes water supplies.

In September, the US Geological Survey released raw data on water quality from a well near Pavillion, but did not provide any analysis on the data, leaving the information open to questions.

The EPA said at the time that the data was "generally consistent" with groundwater monitoring data at Pavillion that it had previously released.

Encana, which is providing bottled water to about 20 families in Pavillion, blasted the delay.

"It's disappointing, there's no credible reason to delay any further," Encana spokesman Doug Hock told Reuters.

The study is a "waste of time and money", he said, adding his company thinks the USGS data showed the water was not contaminated by fracking.

The EPA said in 2011 Wyoming was much more vulnerable than other areas of the country to water contamination from fracking chemicals because drilling there often takes place much closer to the surface than in other states.

In the recent past, the agency also delayed results on a wider study on fracking's effects on national water supplies until 2014, two years after initial targets it had set.

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

Reaction pours in after Rockefeller announcement West Virginia Public Broadcasting - Online

01/11/2013

The political world watched Friday as Sen. Jay Rockefeller announced he would be retiring from his job after his term ends in 2014. Democrats are thanking him for his service and Republicans see the announcement as an opportunity.

Sen. Joe Manchin released a statement thanking Rockefeller for his decades of service.

"We wish him, his wife Sharon and their family only the best in their future endeavors, and I know that Jay will continue to make a difference in the lives of others," Manchin said.

Michael Bennet, the chair of the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee, acknowledged the senators decades of service in a statement.

"Democrats maintain a two to one voter registration advantage over Republicans in West Virginia and I know there are a number of leaders there who will consider taking this next step to serve their state," he said.

"Today is the next step in West Virginia's conservative future. This 2014 campaign for U.S. Senate here will mean a clear choice for voters. Will folks support a Republican who will fight for our coal jobs and protect us from Washington D.C? Absolutely," said state Republican Party chairman Conrad Lucas.

Shelley Moore Capito, Republican Congresswoman from the Second District, has already announced her intention to run for the seat.

Latest News :

Sen. Jay Rockefeller will be finishing his career as a United States Senator at the end of 2014, after 30 years in Washington. He also served as governor of West Virginia, a member of the House of Delegates, the president of West Virginia Wesleyan College, and the Secretary of State in West Virginia.

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By Ben Adducchio & Dave Mistich

Sen. Jay Rockefeller won't be seeking another term in the U.S. Senate, he announced Friday in Charleston.

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

Rockefeller announces he will not run again West Virginia Public Broadcasting - Online

01/11/2013

· U.S. Senator Jay Rockefeller announced Friday that he will not seek re-election in 2014.

The Senator's speech at the Culture Center in Charleston announcing his retirement focused mostly on his love of the state he represents and its people.

Rockefeller thanked the people of West Virginia, noting their unique, collective personality.

"West Virginians are people who are so incredibly hard-working, never shunning away from any physical task or uphill battle which most battles are," said Rockefeller. "Like the gritty proud work of a coal miner or a steelworker, or the fight for a better future, almost always against incredible odds."

Rockefeller said he plans on spending his time away from Congress with his family as he looks for new ways to serve the public.

In early December, Republican Shelley Moore Capito, who represents West Virginia in the state's 2nd district in the U.S. House of Representatives, announced her plans to seek Rockefeller's seat in 2014.

Sen. Jay Rockefeller will be finishing his career as a United States Senator at the end of 2014, after 30 years in Washington. He also served as governor of West Virginia, a member of the House of Delegates, the president of West Virginia Wesleyan College, and the Secretary of State in West Virginia.

Rockefeller announces he will not run again

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EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

New York Fracking Opposition Groups Collect Comments To Give To State Regulators Huffington Post, The

01/11/2013

ALBANY, N.Y. (AP) — As Gov. Andrew Cuomo's administration nears completion of regulations that could lift a 4 1/2-year-old ban on shale gas drilling in New York, opposition groups have ramped up efforts to persuade the governor to say no to fracking.

Environmental, health and community groups opposed to shale gas drilling and hydraulic fracturing, or "fracking," say they collected more than 200,000 comments during an intense 30-day effort featuring online coaching and comment-writing workshops at churches, community centers, food co-ops, coffee shops and holiday house parties from New York City to Buffalo. They plan to give cases of comments to regulators on Friday, the last day to comment on proposed drilling rules.

Industry representatives are also delivering comments to the Department of Environmental Conservation, arguing that the proposed rules are so strict they'll effectively prevent drilling in New York's part of the massive Marcellus Shale formation.

DEC must read and respond to the comments. The agency received 66,000 comments during a four-month comment period on the earlier version of the regulations and the 1,500-page environmental impact study, and took most of 2012 to read, categorize and respond to them.

DEC has a deadline of the end of February to finalize the regulations. Otherwise it has to draft new regulations and hold additional hearings, potentially adding months onto the process.

Fracking, a technology that releases gas from shale by injecting a well with millions of gallons of chemically treated water and sand, has made it possible to tap into deep reserves of oil and gas but has also raised concerns about pollution. Regulators contend that water and air pollution problems are rare, but environmental groups and some scientists say there hasn't been enough research on those issues.

The technology has drawn intense scrutiny since the focus of gas drilling companies has shifted in recent years to the Marcellus Shale, a massive rock formation underlying New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio and West Virginia.

"We're delivering these comments to DEC, but they're very much directed at Gov. Cuomo," said John Armstrong of New Yorkers Against Fracking. "We think this is truly a statement to the governor that he has a responsibility to follow through on his promise and base the decision to frack or not to frack on the science."

Armstrong said the comment letters "are very clear that no regulation can make this safe, and they should ban it."

Yoko Ono and her son Sean Lennon, leaders of Artists Against Fracking, are scheduled to participate in a news conference at the Capitol discussing the comments at noon Friday.

Albany lawyer Tom West said he'll deliver comments he's prepared for drilling industry clients on Friday. He said the regulations are excessively strict, with numerous arbitrary provisions that make it impossible to site a well in many areas.

"The bottom line is, there are many additional requirements that have been piled onto the proposal from 2011 that don't have a factual or scientific basis and will make it very difficult to drill in New York," West said. "Industry can only take so much. We're willing to live within a high environmental bar, but it has to be attainable."

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"The enviros will get what they want, very limited drilling," West said. "Landowners will be left out in the cold, and there will be very little economic development in the Southern Tier," the area of New York north of the Pennsylvania border where drilling most likely would take place.

State Lawmakers And Environmental Activists Express Opposition To Hydro Fracking

NEW YORK, NY - JANUARY 11: Opponents of hydraulic fracturing in New York state attend a news conference and rally against hydraulic fracturing, also known as fracking, on January 11, 2012 in New York City. The event, which was held on the steps of City Hall, called for an end to the controversial gas drilling method as environmental groups increasingly warn about contamination of the state's aquifers that could poison its drinking water. (Photo by Spencer Platt/Getty Images)

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Department Of Environmental Conservation Holds Hydro Fracking Hearing

NEW YORK, NY - NOVEMBER 30: Opponents and supporters of gas-drilling, or fracking, walk into the last of four public hearings on proposed fracking regulations in upstate New York on November 30, 2011 in New York City. Fracking, a process that injects millions of gallons of chemical mixed water into a well in order to release gas, has become a contentious issue in New York as critics of the process believe it contaminates drinking water among other hazards. New York City gets much of its drinking water from upstate reservoirs. If the regulations are approved, drilling in the upstate New York Marcellus Shale could begin next year. (Photo by Spencer Platt/Getty Images)

Cuadrilla Shale Fracking Plant

PRESTON, LANCASHIRE - OCTOBER 07: Engineers on the drilling platform of the Cuadrilla shale fracking facility on October 7, 2012 in Preston, Lancashire. The controversial method of extracting gas by pumping high pressure water and chemicals into shale formations deep underground has been blamed for two minor earthquakes in the surrounding region. Environmental campaigners are calling for a halt to the drilling of what Cuadrilla believe could be significant reserves of natural gas. (Photo by Matthew Lloyd/Getty Images)

Cuadrilla Shale Fracking Plant

PRESTON, LANCASHIRE - OCTOBER 07: Engineers at work on the drilling platform of the Cuadrilla shale fracking facility on October 7, 2012 in Preston, Lancashire. The controversial method of extracting gas by pumping high pressure water and chemicals into shale formations deep underground has been blamed for two minor earthquakes in the surrounding region. Environmental campaigners are calling for a halt to the drilling of what Cuadrilla believe could be significant reserves of natural gas. (Photo by Matthew Lloyd/Getty Images)

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PRESTON, LANCASHIRE - OCTOBER 07: General views of the Cuadrilla shale fracking facility on October 7, 2012 in Preston, Lancashire. The controversial method of extracting gas by pumping high pressure water and chemicals into shale formations deep underground has been blamed for two minor earthquakes in the surrounding region. Environmental campaigners are calling for a halt to the drilling of what Cuadrilla believe could be significant reserves of

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

natural gas. (Photo by Matthew Lloyd/Getty Images)

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PRESTON, LANCASHIRE - OCTOBER 07: Engineers look at the Cuadrilla shale fracking facility on October 7, 2012 in Preston, Lancashire. The controversial method of extracting gas by pumping high pressure water and chemicals into shale formations deep underground has been blamed for two minor earthquakes in the surrounding region. Environmental campaigners are calling for a halt to the drilling of what Cuadrilla believe could be significant reserves of natural gas. (Photo by Matthew Lloyd/Getty Images)

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PRESTON, LANCASHIRE - OCTOBER 07: A lump of shale rock on display at the Cuadrilla shale fracking facility on October 7, 2012 in Preston, Lancashire. The controversial method of extracting gas by pumping high pressure water and chemicals into shale formations deep underground has been blamed for two minor earthquakes in the surrounding region. Environmental campaigners are calling for a halt to the drilling of what Cuadrilla believe could be significant reserves of natural gas. (Photo by Matthew Lloyd/Getty Images)

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Cuadrilla Shale Fracking Plant

PRESTON, LANCASHIRE - OCTOBER 07: Drill heads on display at the entrance to the Cuadrilla shale fracking facility on October 7, 2012 in Preston, Lancashire. The controversial method of extracting gas by pumping high pressure water and chemicals into shale formations deep underground has been blamed for two minor earthquakes in the surrounding region. Environmental campaigners are calling for a halt to the drilling of what Cuadrilla believe could be significant reserves of natural gas. (Photo by Matthew Lloyd/Getty Images)

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EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

Hydraulic Fracturing Prevention Press Conference

NEW YORK, NY - APRIL 25: Actor/director Mark Ruffalo (C) speaks at the Hydraulic Fracturing prevention press conference urging the protection of the drinking water source of 15 million Americans at Foley Square on April 25, 2011 in New York City. (Photo by D Dipasupil/Getty Images)

Hydraulic Fracturing Prevention Press Conference

NEW YORK, NY - APRIL 25: (L-R) Actor/director Mark Ruffalo, Denise Katzman, Wenonah Hauter, and Water Defense co-founder/campaign director Claire Sandberg attend the Hydraulic Fracturing prevention press conference urging the protection of the drinking water source of 15 million Americans at Foley Square on April 25, 2011 in New York City. (Photo by D Dipasupil/Getty Images)

Josh Fox on Obama, the EPA, and House Republicans Who Had Him Arrested

HuffPost Green Editor Joanna Zelman talks to Josh Fox, director of the documentary 'Gasland,' about hydro-fracking, the EPA, and the House Republicans who had him arrested during a Congressional hearing.

Game Changer in Green: Mark Ruffalo

The expertise and the grassroots zeal Mark Ruffalo has brought to the issue of fracking is changing the game in green.

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Fracking Pollution Nowhere to Be Found NewsMax - Online

01/11/2013

If frackophobes are to be believed, natural-gas fracking is the most frightful environmental nightmare since Japan's Fukushima nuclear-power plant melted down amid an earthquake and tsunami in March 2011.

In "Promised Land," Matt Damon's new anti-fracking film funded by the United Arab Emirates, one character demonstrates this production technique's "dangers" by drenching a toy farm with household chemicals and then setting it ablaze.

In the upcoming pro-fracking film, "FrackNation," one Pennsylvania homeowner absurdly claims that fracking polluted his well water with weapons-grade uranium. (For details, watch AXS-TV on Tuesday, January 22, at 9 p.m. EST.)

In an agitprop poster from the group New Yorkers Against Fracking, the Statue of Liberty furiously topples natural-gas drilling towers with her torch as energy-company big rigs flee in horror.

These warnings might be believable if fracking regulators seemed even slightly worried. Instead, federal and state environmental officials appear positively serene about hydraulic fracturing, a decades-old technology that uses sand and chemically treated water to shatter shale deposits 5,000 to 8,000 feet below the water table and liberate natural gas from the ruptured rocks.

"In no case have we made a definitive determination that the fracking process has caused chemicals to enter groundwater," Environmental Protection Agency administrator Lisa Jackson stated last April. In May 2011, she told the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: "I'm not aware of any proven case where the fracking process itself has affected water."

The EPA tested drinking water in Dimock, Pa., which ecologists claim fracking has tainted. "EPA has determined that there are not levels of contaminants present that would require additional action by the agency," it concluded last July. Regional administrator Shawn M. Garvin added: "The Agency has used the best available scientific data to provide clarity to Dimock residents and address their concerns about the safety of their drinking water."

Deroy Murdock is a media fellow with the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace at Stanford University. E-mail him at deroy.Murdock@gmail.com. Read more reports from Deroy Murdock — [Click Here Now](#).

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

'Promised Land' offers a false choice on shale development Politico - Online

01/11/2013

News outlets across the country have focused a great deal of attention on the movie "Promised Land," which is supposed to be everything from a dialogue on developing natural gas from shale to the "American identity" (according to the film's star, Matt Damon). For the sake of the film's producers, it's probably good that the media has focused so much on the film: based on universally poor reviews and a lackluster opening weekend, it's likely the hype around the film will far exceed its actual performance.

All that aside, the fundamental problem with the movie – and perhaps one reason for its less than stellar reception – is that it sets up a false choice: the environment or the economy.

Had the producers done some research beyond watching "Gasland," their film likely would have been much different.

We all know that developing oil and natural gas from shale has provided a big economic boost to the United States, even at a time when the rest of the economy is struggling. In Pennsylvania – the unstated setting for "Promised Land," and where much of it was filmed – the six counties that are producing the most natural gas from the Marcellus Shale all have unemployment rates below the national average. North Dakota, thanks to development of the Bakken Shale, enjoys the lowest unemployment in the country, less than half the national rate.

Abundant supplies of oil and natural gas from shale have also helped reduce oil imports, and affordable natural gas supplies mean consumers are paying lower utility bills. Manufacturers, meanwhile, are reinvesting billions of dollars in the United States to take advantage of low cost natural gas.

But what's truly amazing, and where "Promised Land" diverges most from reality, is that all of this is being accomplished not only in a responsible manner, but in a way that actually improves the environment.

Similar to that infamous "flaming faucet" in "Gasland," "Promised Land" has a scene where a man lights a model farm on fire to simulate what happens as a result of hydraulic fracturing. Also like "Gasland," the scene is unsupported by the facts.

As countless independent experts have noted, methane – a flammable gas – occurs naturally in drinking water wells throughout the country, which is why Colorado regulators said the flaming faucet in "Gasland" was "not related to oil and gas activity." Residents in many regions were able to light their tap water on fire long before shale development ever occurred in their area. The "flaming farm" scene in "Promised Land" is so divorced from reality that Scientific American called it "ridiculous."

State regulators from across the country, meanwhile, have affirmed that hydraulic fracturing is safe and protective of drinking water. Even Lisa Jackson, outgoing administrator for President Obama's EPA, said last year: "In no case have we made a definitive determination that the [fracturing] process has caused chemicals to enter groundwater."

Oil,

Movies,

Fracking,

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

Natural Gas,

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

**EPA extends comment period for Pavillion study
KGWN-TV - Online**

01/11/2013

CASPER, Wyo. (AP) - The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has once again extended the public comment period for its study of groundwater pollution in a central Wyoming gas field.

The comment period for the EPA investigation in Pavillion was scheduled to end Tuesday but has been extended until Sept. 30. The comment period was extended twice last year.

The EPA theorized over a year ago that hydraulic fracturing may have played a role in the pollution. The federal agency says the longer comment period will allow more time for people to weigh in on the testing.

The Casper Star-Tribune reports both a landowner with contaminated groundwater and the owner of the Pavillion gas field, Encana Oil and Gas, object to extending the comment period. Both sides say they want the studies to wrap up.

Information from: Casper (Wyo.) Star-Tribune, <http://www.trib.com>

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EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

'FrackNation' Review: Powerful Response to Anti-Fracking Hysteria Breitbart.com

01/11/2013

When a film offers a free-market perspective on the most controversial energy production technique in the country and still gets sterling reviews from Variety and the New York Times, it must be good. In fact, "FrackNation" isn't just good. It's excellent.

Last night I attended the west coast premiere of "FrackNation" with co-directors Ann McElhinney, Phelim McAleer and Magdalena Segieda. The film is structured as a road movie with McAleer as the journalist/narrator on the search for the truth about the costs and benefits of hydraulic fracturing aka fracking. What he finds flies directly in the face of claims made by director Josh Fox in the Oscar-nominated film "Gasland."

"FrackNation" makes a convincing case that Fox has overplayed his hand on the dangers of fracking, linking it with cancer clusters the CDC says don't exist and blaming it for contaminating water which the EPA (both state and federal) says is fine to drink. There's a hilarious scene in which Fox talks about being subject to noxious fumes from fracking in the hills above Los Angeles followed by interviews with joggers in the area raving about the air quality.

Another highlight is a scene in which a couple from Dimock, Pa. who claim their well water has been contaminated with "weapons-grade" uranium is seen reacting to the EPA's announcement that their water has been tested and found safe to drink. Their outrage over the good news tells you all you need to know about them. And Fox, who relies on their bogus claims in his film, comes out looking like a snake-oil salesman in Elvis Costello hipster glasses.

The real surprise in "FrackNation" isn't the gotcha moments, which are expected, but the amount of genuine heart McAleer brings to the proceedings. Interviews with farmers along the Delaware river and an aging pensioner in Poland bring home the fact that eco-hysteria has real victims whose stories often get ignored by the media.

Mark Cuban has purchased the broadcast rights for "FrackNation." It will premiere on his AXS.tv network on January 22. Meanwhile, Fox is working on "Gasland 2" with the help of HBO.

The film was funded on Kickstarter by small donations from more than 3,000 individuals. No donations were accepted from anyone connected to the oil and gas industry but, full disclosure, I donated \$25 of the \$212,000 raised. Having seen the completed film, I think it may be the best \$25 I ever spent.

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

EPA extends comment period for Pavillion study Seattle Post-Intelligencer

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San Antonio Express-News - Online

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EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

EPA delaying Pavillion case for 8 months E&E News PM

01/11/2013

U.S. EPA is delaying its work on the Pavillion, Wyo., water pollution case by more than eight months, angering both sides in the bitter debate about whether drilling and hydraulic fracturing contaminated drinking water in the area.

Neither the people who say their water is contaminated nor the company involved, Encana Corp., wanted the delay. Representatives of both sides today criticized the decision.

"This is very disappointing," said Doug Hock, spokesman for Encana Oil & Gas (USA) Inc. "It's a disservice not only to Encana, but to the people of Pavillion and the state of Wyoming. There's no credible reason for any further delay on this issue."

Encana is the main driller in the Pavillion area, where EPA has been testing groundwater because of complaints from landowners about fouled water.

In a draft report released a year ago, the researchers said they had found fluid from hydraulic fracturing in groundwater but not in drinking water.

Encana, along with state officials, maintains that EPA contaminated the water itself when it drilled its two monitoring wells (EnergyWire, Dec. 7, 2012).

EPA is to put a notice in the Federal Register tomorrow that it will extend the comment period, which was to expire next week, until Sept. 30, according to a federal document posted today. The agency released a statement but did not provide an explicit reason for the delay.

"This extension will allow the public additional opportunity to comment on EPA's draft report and the latest round of sampling conducted by EPA" and the U.S. Geological Survey, an agency spokesman said in a statement. "The agency will take into account new data, further stakeholder input, and public comment as it continues to review the status of the Pavillion investigation and considers options for moving forward."

The vague reasoning left room for people on both sides to speculate about what is happening behind the scenes.

Deb Thomas, an organizer who has worked with the Pavillion-area residents with water complaints, said she believes EPA headquarters officials in Washington are interfering with the diligent efforts of scientists at the agency's Denver-based Region 8 office.

"Region 8 has done such a good job on this," Thomas said. "It appears that upper levels of management are not giving residents of Pavillion the same consideration."

Industry officials say EPA is trying to figure out what to do with flawed findings.

"This delay shows that the EPA is running scared," said Simon Lomax, the Denver-based spokesman for the industry campaign Energy in Depth. "The agency knows its draft report is deeply flawed, but instead of doing the responsible thing and withdrawing it, EPA is dragging out the process."

Some pointed out that EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson plans to leave before the end of the month. An industry source

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

speculated that the agency might not want a new administrator to have to deal with the Pavillion controversy "on day one."

The length of the delay is also unusual. Comment periods are usually extended by 30, 60 or 90 days.

EPA has already delayed the case once after a combined assault on the findings by industry and state officials.

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

Comment Period on Fracking Study Extended Again BNA's Daily Environment Report

01/11/2013

The Environmental Protection Agency has extended the comment deadline on the external review of the draft research report, Investigation of Ground Water Contamination Near Pavillion, Wyoming, through Sept. 30, according to a notice being published Jan. 11. EPA's draft December 2011 report linked groundwater contamination in Pavillion, Wyo., to hydraulic fracturing, but that finding has been disputed by the Independent Petroleum Association of America. The report indicated that samples taken from deep monitoring wells in the aquifer contained synthetic chemicals, such as glycols and alcohols, consistent with gas production and hydraulic fracturing fluids. EPA last extended comments on the report in March 2012. Comments can be submitted through the <http://www.regulations.gov> website using Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-ORD-2011-0895. Additional information on the site, which includes the draft report, is available at <http://www.epa.gov/region8/superfund/wy/pavillion/index.html> (60 DEN A-13, 3/29/12).

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

EPA Fracking Report Leaves Out Contamination Stats Occupational Health & Safety - Online

01/11/2013

In a progress report released last month, the EPA failed to address water contamination frequency as a result of fracking.

Jan 09, 2013

As the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency conducts a study on the effects of natural gas drilling, there is concern that its recent progress report left out one important aspect of the controversy surrounding fracking: drinking water contamination.

The progress report, released last month, details the findings thus far of the congressionally mandated EPA study into fracking. The full report, which will be released next year, will not address the frequency at which drinking-water sources become contaminated, be it once in every 1 million wells or once in every 1,000 wells.

Fracking, or hydraulic fracturing, is the process of shooting water, sand, and chemicals underground to release natural gas from shale. Many in the industry and government believe that this is a beneficial project if done safely and correctly. However, EPA failed to cite any research that may have been done into the question of drinking-water contamination.

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

**Live EPA update today on Fracturing and Produced Water Panel; Energy Water Solutions' Dr. Stewart on EPA frac flowback and produced water panel
Money News**

01/11/2013

WASHINGTON, Jan. 11, 2013 /PRNewswire/ – David R. Stewart, PhD PE and Chief Science Officer of Energy Water Solutions in Houston Texas was invited to give feedback as an expert member on the Environmental Protection Agency's Frac Flowback and Produced Water Technical Roundtable. The EPA hosts an online update via live webinar on these issues today. Dr. Stewart was invited to Washington DC with other industry experts to meetings on September 15, 2012 of the Hydraulic Fracturing panel which was held at EPA Headquarters. This committee was formed at the request of Congress, and this morning there will be a live online update to "EPA's study of the Potential Impacts of Hydraulic Fracturing on Drinking Water Resources: Flowback and Produced Water Technical Roundtable". Dr. Stewart said, "Congress asked the EPA to study these issues, and our role is to discuss future regulations including using frac flowback and produced water for beneficial use". Dave Stewart has patented technologies and processes that work together for Energy Water Solutions clients to filter frac flowback and produced water and turn it to clean fresh water. This clean water still needs state legislation passed, to be ground discharged in some states for beneficial energy and agricultural uses.

Energy Water Solutions' Dr. Dave Stewart participated in several meetings on expert panels at the invitation of the EPA, to discuss how hydraulic fracturing could affect drinking water resources. Representative energy company participants on this EPA frac water committee include Chesapeake Energy Corporation, Chevron, HighMount, Newfield Energy, Range Resources, Southwestern Energy as well as regulatory officials from the Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining, Wyoming Oil and Gas Conservation Commission, Railroad Commission of Texas and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. You may see the list of expert participants on the frac flowback and produced water panel and their bios at: www.epa.gov/hfstudy/pdfs/flowback-bio.pdf

The Environmental Protection Agency has scheduled a public webinar for today January 11, 2013 at 9:00 AM Central time as an update to the Hydraulic Fracturing Study progress report. To register for this public webinar please login to: www.cluin.org/conf/tio/FRACJan11/

Energy Water Solutions is a Houston Texas firm with leadership from energy, water and technology backgrounds from Conoco-Phillips, BP, Accenture, Siemens, Stewart Environmental and SAP. EWS filters produced water for oil and gas producers with scalable water filtration systems close to the well head, immediately lowering production costs and creating incremental fresh water for beneficial use in oil field and agricultural applications.

For a copy of available documents or more information, please contact:

Ed Cowsar, Executive VP Sales and Marketing

Energy Water Solutions

800 Town & Country Boulevard, Suite 300

Houston, TX 77024

512.970.4481

or visit www.energywatersolutions.com

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

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EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

EPA again delays Pavillion groundwater investigation related to fracking WyoFile

01/11/2013

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has again delayed action in its highly controversial investigation into contaminated drinking water in Pavillion, Wyoming.

WyoFile obtained a document scheduled to be published in the Federal Register on January 11, 2013, announcing the extension of the public comment period for EPA Region 8's "Investigation of Ground Water Contamination near Pavillion, Wyoming" to September 30, 2013.

Public comment was first initiated in December 2011.

Tanks hold natural gas condensate and mark the spot of producing gas wells in the Pavillion field, in Fremont County, Wyo., in the heart of the Wind River Indian Reservation. The Environmental Protection Agency said it found chemicals that are used in gas drilling in water wells near this site. (Abraham Lustgarten/ProPublica)

That draft report, released publicly in December 2011, alleged that chemicals commonly associated with hydraulic fracturing — or "fracking" — indeed contributed to contaminated drinking water in the tiny, rural farming community.

The report set off a firestorm of criticism from both Wyoming officials and Pavillion natural gas field operator EnCana Oil & Gas USA, taking aim at the EPA's methodology, data and conclusions. In the controversy, a scientific peer review required to finalize the draft report has been continually delayed.

This week's news of yet another delay further frustrated stakeholders on all sides of the issue, including some Pavillion area residents who believe the EPA's investigation — and conclusions mentioned in the draft report — is the most reliable information on the matter.

"What it really means for us is months and months of waiting and still being exposed to impacts that we've suffered all along and having no resolution," Pavillion area rancher John Fenton told WyoFile. "Go ahead and extend public comment, but allow the peer review go forward. I'm trying to find out who requested this."

A spokesman for EnCana Oil & Gas USA said the company was equally disappointed.

"This issue goes to our reputation and we take this very seriously and we don't beleive the issues in Pavillion are related to our oil and gas operation," EnCana spokesman Doug Hock told WyoFile. "It's a disservice to us and a disservice to people of Pavillion and to the state of Wyoming."

Hock said EnCana had prepared several third party reports from geologists, hydrologists and other experts to submit to EPA next week. The reports essentially are a critique of EPA's groundwater investigation, which EnCana believes has been proven scientifically invalid.

That question of validity, however, cannot be officially answered until — and unless — a peer review weighs in on the matter.

Jeffrey Locker stands next to a natural gas well behind his home near Pavillion. (Dustin Bleizeffer/WyoFile – click to enlarge)

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

The EPA issued this statement today; "During this time EPA will continue its public outreach activities including meeting with key stakeholders and posting additional technical information on the agency's website. This extension will allow the public additional opportunity to comment on EPA's draft report and the latest round of sampling conducted by EPA and USGS. The Agency will take into account new data, further stakeholder input, and public comment as it continues to review the status of the Pavillion investigation and considers options for moving forward."

In meantime, dozens of families are left without answers as to why their drinking water is fouled.

"We have all this work and it's not being allowed to continue on through this peer review process and come to some conclusion," said Fenton.

The state has pitched in money to provide cisterns as a temporary fix, although few homeowners have committed to having them installed because they still have to pay for water. The state has also launched planning efforts for a long-term water supply solution.

EnCana is still providing some water on a temporary basis. The company continues to operate about 145 natural gas wells in the Pavillion field, and says it has not performed any drilling or fracking operations since 2007. This past year, a potential buyer backed out of negotiations to purchase the field.

"That buyer decided, because of the ongoing issues with EPA, decided not to go through with that transaction," said Hock. "It's not a core asset for us."

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

Opponents Say 'Fracking' Would Carry Risks for Mo. ENR Midwest - Online

01/11/2013

digital wire

Jan. 06--Prospects for developing shale energy in Northwest Missouri would contain certain risks for the state's resources, according to groups opposed to the drilling technology.

Despite a recent U.S. Chamber of Commerce study on shale energy, opponents are criticizing the production methods that would be used to extract oil and natural gas from the deposits. In its report, the chamber said Missouri would benefit from more than 64,000 jobs and annual revenue of \$488 million by 2020 by engaging in the industry. The organization said hydraulic fracturing -- now known more colloquially as "fracking" -- would make shale energy feasible and sustainable.

However, one state organization said it would likely take a future stance against the technology based on a projected harm to water resources.

"I would predict we would come out against it," said Lorin Crandall, clean water program director for the Missouri Coalition for the Environment. "We haven't worked directly on this issue yet, because it hasn't been an issue in Missouri."

Mr. Crandall said the coalition would decry anything such as fracking technology that would threaten ground and surface water resources. It's already believed the method would be dangerous to Missouri's watersheds, he added.

Brook Lenker, executive director of the FracTracker Alliance in Pennsylvania, said there are a host of legitimate environmental and water concerns to consider with fracking. The organization was created to monitor the shale industry's activities, and Mr. Lenker said economic benefits constitute only part of the equation.

"There's still a lot of unanswered questions around this industry," he said. "There's also concern about air pollution closer to the activity, but also primarily to the ozone."

Deforestation and habitat impacts are other areas that deserve scrutiny in a review of fracking, Mr. Lenker said. An increased cost of living for residents and demands placed on community resources would accompany an introduction of the industry.

"You may see some corollary benefits, but those may erode over time," he said.

Climate change is another flashpoint with shale energy, Mr. Lenker said, since a boom in the natural gas industry is overshadowing development of alternative energy resources. Recent studies also have shown higher levels of ambient methane above gas fields than first thought, he added.

Potential also exists for work-related accidents and stress on police and emergency response. Schools would face a strain due to an influx of transient families, Mr. Lenker said, and displaced residents would face disproportionate rental costs.

"Those are some big issues that the public needs to know," he said.

The Geological Survey Program of the Missouri Department of Natural Resources said the state has "potentially large

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

quantities of 'unconventional' energy resources" that include oil shale. The Forest City Basin of Northwest Missouri is cited as one area with the potential for oil and gas production.

"Relatively large deposits of 'heavy oil' exist that are of increasing interest to producers," the department said.

Dr. Shari Dunn-Norman, head of the petroleum engineering program at Missouri University of Science and Technology in Rolla, said she believes more exploration is needed first to determine the potential for Missouri's oil and gas production. She is vice chairwoman of the State Oil and Gas Council, which regulates the drilling industry in Missouri.

The controversy that has surrounded fracking throughout the nation has contributed to misinformation among average citizens, she said.

"Unfortunately, most people don't understand geology," she said. "We're not telling the science and the engineering. We're promoting the emotion."

The term fracking itself has taken on a negative connotation, Dr. Dunn-Norman added, although she said the industry prefers to use the terminology of hydraulic fracturing to describe the process.

Cory Stephens identified himself to the News-Press as a 26-year-old St. Joseph resident who believes fracking is harmful to the environment, with its economic development rewards negligible.

"Thousands of complaints by average citizens who live in proximity to fracked wells have been logged with local, state and federal regulators, alleging severe illnesses in humans and animals; leakages into the water supply have been documented in such films as 'Gasland' and long-term health effects remain unknown," Mr. Stephens said. "It is also known that fracking can trigger earthquakes, and a University of Texas-Austin study in 2012 found these earthquakes may be more common than originally believed."

"Hydraulic fracturing is exempted from seven major federal environmental regulations, including the Clean Water Act and the Safe Drinking Water Act," he added. "It is through the so-called 'Halliburton Loophole' to the latter that polluters are able to keep secret from the public and regulators the chemicals they use for fracking. Industry-backed websites that purport to reveal additives do not include chemicals considered 'trade secrets.' However, it is known that diesel fuel is sometimes used in fracking, a substance which includes the chemicals benzene and toluene, known carcinogens. What else might be in fracking fluid?"

Mr. Stephens said the Environmental Protection Agency found significant water contamination in Pavilion, Wyo., verified by multiple tests in 2011 and 2012.

"It was reported by The Associated Press that Gov. Matt Mead asked the Obama EPA to delay the release of their findings, presumably at the behest of the methane gas industry," he said.

"Companies engaging in fracking have spent over a billion dollars since 1990 in campaign contributions and lobbying at all levels of government, from statehouses to Congress," Mr. Stephens said. "The minor economic benefits do not justify the potentially dangerous and toxic means. There are no jobs on a dead planet."

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EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

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EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

OSM wants more from state to address coal dams West Virginia Public Broadcasting - Online

01/11/2013

· West Virginia regulators should do more to monitor the risks of slurry impoundments to break through mine work, according to a recent study from the federal Office of Surface Mining and Reclamation Enforcement.

OSM issued a report with suggestions to the West Virginia DEP Thursday.

The distance between an impoundment and mining activity can indicate the likelihood of a threat. On a conference call, Jim Pierce Senior Engineer at the DEP said mining activity should not happen within the "safety zone" which is 200 feet from the top water mark of the impoundment and 100 feet of solid material beneath the pool of slurry.

"We're going to go back and take a look and try to get a better handle of what has been mined within these safety zones," Pierce said, "and if we find anything else we'll take appropriate action."

OSM found no imminent danger situations of a breakthrough in underground work but has suggestions for the state DEP to better evaluate the threat.

OSM suggested state DEP recognize the limitations of maps in locating proximity of mine activity and the impoundments.

Roger Calhoun is the West Virginia Field Office Director for OSM and was also on the call.

"What we found was that there was a reliance on underground mine maps to identify whether minable seams near basins were too close," Calhoun said, "and our concern is that underground mine maps old ones and new ones just aren't quite reliable enough without some kind of independent verification."

The federal office would also like to see the state take precautions with new mining around capped or closed impoundments; specifically OSM says the DEP should continue to check the consistency of the capped waste to see if it the material has the potential to cause a break through.

"Sometimes when the state notices a problem and requires an operator to close the facility," he said, "there have been occasions where that facility gets reconfigured from a larger impoundment, gets capped over."

"Then sometime the operator is inclined to put smaller cells ponds if you will on top of that cap and we had a concern there that you still need to know what the consistency is of the material underneath the cap to know if the material is still flowable."

The report is the third issued by the OSM. Federal evaluations began after a series of dams failed including one in Martin County, Kentucky in 2000.

This report evaluated 15 sites in West Virginia, twelve more than the second report issued in 2008.

"When we started phase three we said instead of a very small sample," he said, "we need to look at a bigger sample so that we can judge whether some of these concerns that we had are related to a site specific issue or whether there is a more programmatic concern out there with how the state investors, it's program so that's where we're into in phase three."

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

Jim Pierce with DEP says the state office has agreed to the recommendations.

"West Virginia DEP has always been very much concerned with dam safety," he said, "and ensuring dam safety on all of these structures from the beginning so in that light if OSM has recommendations that can improve dam safety we're going to embrace those and carry those out."

Pierce says the office will re-examine existing 132 sites within the next three years and rely not only on mine maps but also drilling and investigative tools to determine whether or not the mine seams are feasible.

The office will also require companies to evaluate any closed or capped impoundments before they mine under the waste.

The federal OSM plans to look at other states and their methods for evaluating breakthrough potential over the next three years.

Latest News :

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Sen. Jay Rockefeller won't be seeking another term in the U.S. Senate, he announced Friday in Charleston.

OSM wants more from state to address coal dams

West Virginia regulators should do more to monitor the risks of slurry impoundments to break through mine work, according to a recent study from the federal Office of Surface Mining and Reclamation Enforcement.

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The face of Uptown Beckley has changed over the past few years; a parking garage was built and opened, buildings have been torn down and several renovated. Some of the work is at the hands of one family, the Bickey's.

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

Sen. Rockefeller to retire after his term ends
West Virginia Public Broadcasting - Online

01/11/2013

· Sen. Jay Rockefeller won't be seeking another term in the U.S. Senate, he announced Friday in Charleston.

Sen. Rockefeller is retiring from the U.S. Senate after his term ends at the end of 2014. He has served in the U.S. Senate since 1984, when he won the seat.

Rockefeller has also served as governor of West Virginia, Secretary of State and a member of the House of Delegates.

Rep. Shelley Moore Capito is running for the 2014 senate seat.

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EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

Stakeholders react to EPA fracking study, new agency chief West Virginia Public Broadcasting - Online

01/11/2013

· WV stakeholders are intrigued by what's going to happen with environmental policy moving forward. The EPA is conducting a hydraulic fracturing study, while at the same time the administrator has announced her resignation.

At the request of Congress, the EPA started its hydraulic fracturing study in 2010, and final results won't be released until 2014.

In December, an update was released which described 18 research projects underway to study hydraulic fracturing's impact on water resources.

The study is looking at several questions including how water withdrawals for drilling affect water, as well as the impact of fluid spills on water resources. But a few days after the update was released, EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson announced she was resigning her post.

Chuck Wyrostok with the West Virginia Chapter of the Sierra Club says he's interested in seeing how a new EPA chief will affect the study, if at all.

"I don't know who is going to be in there next, and how they are going to handle it. It could be good, it could be bad. Depending on who comes in and what their agenda is I guess," he said.

Wyrostok says he wants to see some more areas of research, on this issue, particularly into groundwater contamination problems.

He's particularly concerned with how air quality is affected by fracking.

"We've seen health problems from drilling sites, even from the toxic emissions in the air. We know people have gotten sick from that. They are industrial sites; this isn't your grandfather's well anymore when it took up half an acre," said Wyrostok.

"These are five acres, six acres, seven acre sites that have compressors and diesel engines running 24 hours a day."

While environmentalists are paying close attention to the developments in environmental policy, other stakeholders are as well.

Corky DeMarco is the executive director of the West Virginia Oil and Natural Gas Association.

He says the agency has studied this all before and determined hydraulic fracturing wasn't harmful to water resources.

"I'm confident that this study will find that there is no contamination with groundwater. Congress has been under the gun to have this study done; unfortunately it's going to take until 2014 to get the results of it done," said DeMarco.

"By that time, the industry might be doing some things differently than what they are currently doing."

DeMarco says he's also paying close attention to who replaces Lisa Jackson as EPA chief.

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

"We're always concerned about who is going to be the lead person in that agency, and how they feel about fossil fuels and how they feel about mineral extractions. Those are always concerns on our part," he said.

"What I think will happen is Congress will dictate the parameters of this study, I would hope since they asked the EPA to do the study, they will monitor the direction of the study so it doesn't get off the original track. But then again who knows until the person gets in there."

The EPA did not approve a request for an interview for this report.

Latest News :

Stakeholders react to EPA fracking study, new agency chief

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EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

5 reasons natural gas won't save us
Salon.com

01/11/2013

We can't drill our way out of the climate crisis without creating an even bigger mess in the process

Topics: AlterNet, natural gas, Climate Change, Methane, , Politics News

This article originally appeared on AlterNet.

If you're hoping the natural gas boom means we've solved our environmental and economic woes, you're going to be disappointed. While natural gas produces less nitrogen oxides and carbon dioxide when burned compared to coal or oil, the end product is only part of the story. The natural gas boom in recent years has been fueled by extreme extraction methods like fracking that are posing a new slurry of environmental problems before the gas even makes it to consumers.

If you look at the complete picture of how we extract natural gas today, you begin to realize pretty quickly that we aren't going to be able to drill our way out of the climate crisis without creating an even bigger mess in the process. The list of impacts from fracking is huge, but here are five to kick off the conversation:

Natural gas may release less pollution when burned, but it still may be a significant contributor to global warming pollution after all because we must take into account what happens during extraction, too. "Scientists are once again reporting alarmingly high methane emissions from an oil and gas field, underscoring questions about the environmental benefits of the boom in natural-gas production that is transforming the US energy system," writes Jeff Tollefson for Nature. He explains:

The researchers, who hold joint appointments with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the University of Colorado in Boulder, first sparked concern in February 2012 with a study suggesting that up to 4% of the methane produced at a field near Denver was escaping into the atmosphere. If methane — a potent greenhouse gas — is leaking from fields across the country at similar rates, it could be offsetting much of the climate benefit of the ongoing shift from coal- to gas-fired plants for electricity generation.

Industry officials and some scientists contested the claim, but at an American Geophysical Union (AGU) meeting in San Francisco, California, last month, the research team reported new Colorado data that support the earlier work, as well as preliminary results from a field study in the Uinta Basin of Utah suggesting even higher rates of methane leakage — an eye-popping 9% of the total production. That figure is nearly double the cumulative loss rates estimated from industry data — which are already higher in Utah than in Colorado.

When it comes to climate change, leaking methane is a big deal. The EPA reports, "Pound for pound, the comparative impact of CH₄ [methane] on climate change is over 20 times greater than CO₂ over a 100-year period.

2. Water Pollution

Methane released during fracking doesn't just end up in the air, but also in the water. By now you've likely already seen the videos of people living near gas drilling operations who can light their water on fire as it comes out of the tap. (If you haven't then it's time to see "Gasland.") In 2011 the United States Geological Survey released a report about water in Pavillion, Wyoming where residents complained about water quality after drilling. Here's what they found:

EPA's analysis of samples taken from the Agency's deep monitoring wells in the aquifer indicates detection of synthetic

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing -

Jan. 10 to 14

chemicals, like glycols and alcohols consistent with gas production and hydraulic fracturing fluids, benzene concentrations well above Safe Drinking Water Act standards and high methane levels. Given the area's complex geology and the proximity of drinking water wells to ground water contamination, EPA is concerned about the movement of contaminants within the aquifer and the safety of drinking water wells over time.

Other studies have show the same, including one published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences. Abrahm Lustgarten writes for ProPublica:

The research was conducted by four scientists at Duke University. They found that levels of flammable methane gas in drinking water wells increased to dangerous levels when those water supplies were close to natural gas wells. They also found that the type of gas detected at high levels in the water was the same type of gas that energy companies were extracting from thousands of feet underground, strongly implying that the gas may be seeping underground through natural or manmade faults and fractures, or coming from cracks in the well structure itself.

And that's just the methane. Frack fluid that is injected into the wells contains a toxic soup of hundreds of chemicals, including carcinogens and volatile organic compounds like benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene and xylene. Companies aren't required to disclose what chemicals they're using either — so it makes it difficult to test for leaks and spills, and for people to be treated for health problems that may arise from exposure.

Oh yeah, and fracking is exempt from the Safe Drinking Water Act — thanks Dick Cheney!

3. Water Consumption

Fracking is water intensive. It can take anywhere from 2 million to 13 million gallons of water to frack a single well and more water is needed to drill the well. Additionally wells are often fracked multiple times, some times as many as 18 times. Where does all that water come from? The Pacific Institute reports:

Water for hydraulic fracturing is typically withdrawn from one location or watershed over several days. Additionally, in some cases, the water is taken from "remote, often environmentally sensitive headwater areas" (Beauduy 2011, 34), where even small withdrawals can have a significant impact on the flow regime. As a result, while fracking may account for a small fraction of a state's or even a basin's water supply, there can be more severe local impacts.

Additionally, much of the water injected underground is either not recovered or is unfit for further use once it is returned to the surface, usually requiring disposal in an underground injection well. This water use represents a "consumptive" use if it is not available for subsequent use within the basin from which it was extracted. In some cases, water is treated and reused for subsequent fracking jobs, although this is still fairly uncommon, and no national estimate on the prevalence of this practice is available.

Already states like Texas and Pennsylvania have run into conflicts with fracking due to water shortages. And things are likely to get worse, as the Pacific Institute states, "In many basins, the application of fracking is still in its infancy and continued development could dramatically increase future water requirements and further intensify conflicts with other uses."

4. Trucks

How does all the water water and chemicals get to drilling sites? Trucks, trucks and more trucks. In Pennsylvania it was estimated that drilling and fracking a single well can result in 1,000 truck trips. For residents in rural areas, this means a constant stream of trucks barreling along small roads, some unpaved. Residents have complained of pollution from idling diesel trucks, roads that aren't big enough for the vehicles, dust pollution on unpaved roads, and excessive wear and tear on bridges and pavement. The results have been accidents galore and big bills for taxpayers.

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

Jim Efstathiou Jr. wrote for Business Week:

A surge in hydraulic fracturing to get gas and oil trapped in rock means drillers need to haul hundreds of truckloads of sand, water and equipment for a single well. Drilling that added jobs and tax revenue for many states also has increased traffic on roads too flimsy to handle the 80,000-pound (36,300 kilogram) trucks that serve well sites.

The resulting road damage will cost tens of millions of dollars to fix and is catching officials from Pennsylvania to Texas off guard. Measures to ensure that roads are repaired don't capture the full cost of damage, potentially leaving taxpayers with the bill, according to Lynne Irwin, director of Cornell University's local roads program in Ithaca, New York.

... Last month, [Texas'] Transportation Commission approved \$40 million to repair roads near the Barnett Shale in North Texas and the Eagle Ford Shale in South Texas.

5. Economic Fallout

So much for the economic boom that fracking was suppose to create for small towns. The road repairs are just the start. In one of the most heavily drilled counties in the Marcellus Shale, a hospital CEO in Pennsylvania is now blaming the gas drilling industry for an operating loss. The AP reported:

Jersey Shore Hospital president and CEO Carey Plummer told the Sun-Gazette of Williamsport that many subcontractors attracted to the area's Marcellus Shale drilling boom do not cover employees.

That has brought a growing number of uninsured people to the community-owned, nonprofit hospital, Plummer said.

"We had a loss," Plummer said. "I don't think it's a sign of the economy. I think it's the influx of the gas, industry and those who lack insurance."

Homeowners may also stand to lose. The Huffington Post reported, "Nationwide Mutual Insurance Co. has become the first major insurance company to say it won't cover damage related to a gas drilling process that blasts chemical-laden water deep into the ground." The company released a memo that said:

After months of research and discussion, we have determined that the exposures presented by hydraulic fracturing are too great to ignore. Risks involved with hydraulic fracturing are now prohibited for General Liability, Commercial Auto, Motor Truck Cargo, Auto Physical Damage and Public Auto (insurance) coverage.

While the fracking industry promises to create jobs, those like Tish O'Dell, co-founder of the Cleveland-area group Mothers Against Drilling in Our Neighborhoods, wonder about what jobs will be lost from impacts to farming, tourism and dairies. She told Midwest Energy News, "If you were going to do a really serious study you would look at these things," she said. "If water is contaminated and fish die, what are the fishermen going to do? If you have parks where people go for peace and quiet, what happens when you turn it into an industrial landscape? If you have an organic dairy and the soil is polluted, what does that mean? These are all valid questions."

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

Colorado Oil And Gas Drilling Regulations Receive Initial Approval Huffington Post, The

01/11/2013

This Dec. 5, 2012 photo shows an oil pump jack in a field adjacent to a sub-division near Fredrick, Colo. (AP Photo/Ed Andrieski)

DENVER (AP) — Colorado regulators gave initial approval Wednesday to rules meant to limit the effects of oil and gas drilling on homes, including a rule increasing the distance that rigs must be from occupied buildings.

The rules approved by the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission are expected to take effect this summer.

One requires wells to be 500 feet from buildings, up from a 350-foot buffer proposed by the commission earlier. Environmentalists wanted even bigger buffers, while farmers and homebuilders were among those saying the larger distances could limit development or hurt loan values on their land.

Also Wednesday, state health and natural resource officials announced the launch this summer of a study of how oil and gas emissions behave and their characteristics in areas along the northern Front Range, which has become a hotbed for drilling. A second phase would study possible health effects.

Environmentalists said the state-sponsored studies are too little, too late, and amount to using people as "lab rats" to determine if they may be suffering health problems because of drilling.

The actions came on the last day of a three-day hearing to consider updating the state's oil and gas rules.

Earlier this week, the oil and gas commission approved rules requiring groundwater sampling both before and after drilling to ensure drinking water supplies haven't been contaminated.

The rules that got preliminary approval Wednesday include requirements for operators who plan to drill within 1,000 feet of occupied buildings to meet new measures on limiting noise, odor, dust and emissions and to protect against spills. They'd also have to give expanded notice to residents.

Plans to drill within 1,000 feet of schools, hospitals or other high-occupancy buildings would trigger a hearing in front of the commission.

State officials said testimony during the rulemaking hearing reinforced views of industry and environmental experts that better science is needed for oil and gas emissions.

The study announced Wednesday "marks another important step in our aggressive efforts to ensure oil and gas development is conducted with the highest standards of environmental protection," said Mike King, executive director of the Colorado Department of Natural Resources.

Mike Chiropolos, who represented a coalition of environmental groups at the hearing, said heart-wrenching testimony from property owners who believe they have been harmed by drilling operations failed to sway regulators who are considering exceptions to the rules.

"Everybody agrees more studies are needed, but the state has not been doing its job. Regulators have been hearing from citizens of Colorado who don't like living in a science experiment while these studies continue. They don't like being lab

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rats," Chiropoulos said after the meeting.

In May, a Denver district court judge threw out a lawsuit filed by a family from the Western Slope claiming oil and gas drilling caused illnesses. The judge said lawyers for the family failed to provide enough evidence of chemical exposure or any proof the drilling company was responsible for their burning eyes and throats, rashes and headaches.

King said Wednesday that strong science is needed along with strong regulation to build public confidence in an industry that is critical to Colorado's economy.

Last year, Colorado developed a national model for the disclosure of chemicals used in hydraulic fracturing fluids. Regulators also opened a water-quality database to the public and strengthened rules to reduce emissions.

Dr. Chris Urbina, executive director of the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, said his agency will work with Colorado State University on the study. It will be similar to an ongoing university-led study of oil and gas emissions in Garfield County on Colorado's Western Slope.

The first phase of the study is projected to last through June 2016. A second phase to develop a health risk assessment would begin in 2016.

Gov. John Hickenlooper, an industry supporter, is seeking \$1.3 million from the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission's Environmental Response Fund to get the project off the ground. The money for that fund comes from oil and gas development.

State Lawmakers And Environmental Activists Express Opposition To Hydro Fracking

NEW YORK, NY - JANUARY 11: Opponents of hydraulic fracturing in New York state attend a news conference and rally against hydraulic fracturing, also known as fracking, on January 11, 2012 in New York City. The event, which was held on the steps of City Hall, called for an end to the controversial gas drilling method as environmental groups increasingly warn about contamination of the state's aquifers that could poison its drinking water. (Photo by Spencer Platt/Getty Images)

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NEW YORK, NY - JANUARY 11: Eric Weltman of Food & Water Watch attends a news conference and rally against hydraulic fracturing, also known as fracking, in New York State on January 11, 2012 in New York City. The event, which was held on the steps of City Hall, called for an end to the controversial gas drilling method as environmental groups increasingly warn about contamination of the state's aquifers that could poison its drinking water. (Photo by Spencer Platt/Getty Images)

Department Of Environmental Conservation Holds Hydro Fracking Hearing

NEW YORK, NY - NOVEMBER 30: Opponents and supporters of gas-drilling, or fracking, walk into the last of four public hearings on proposed fracking regulations in upstate New York on November 30, 2011 in New York City. Fracking, a process that injects millions of gallons of chemical mixed water into a well in order to release gas, has become a contentious issue in New York as critics of the process believe it contaminates drinking water among other hazards. New York City gets much of its drinking water from upstate reservoirs. If the regulations are approved, drilling in the upstate New York Marcellus Shale could begin next year. (Photo by Spencer Platt/Getty Images)

Cuadrilla Shale Fracking Plant

PRESTON, LANCASHIRE - OCTOBER 07: Engineers on the drilling platform of the Cuadrilla shale fracking facility on

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October 7, 2012 in Preston, Lancashire. The controversial method of extracting gas by pumping high pressure water and chemicals into shale formations deep underground has been blamed for two minor earthquakes in the surrounding region. Environmental campaigners are calling for a halt to the drilling of what Cuadrilla believe could be significant reserves of natural gas. (Photo by Matthew Lloyd/Getty Images)

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PRESTON, LANCASHIRE - OCTOBER 07: Engineers at work on the drilling platform of the Cuadrilla shale fracking facility on October 7, 2012 in Preston, Lancashire. The controversial method of extracting gas by pumping high pressure water and chemicals into shale formations deep underground has been blamed for two minor earthquakes in the surrounding region. Environmental campaigners are calling for a halt to the drilling of what Cuadrilla believe could be significant reserves of natural gas. (Photo by Matthew Lloyd/Getty Images)

Cuadrilla Shale Fracking Plant

PRESTON, LANCASHIRE - OCTOBER 07: General views of the Cuadrilla shale fracking facility on October 7, 2012 in Preston, Lancashire. The controversial method of extracting gas by pumping high pressure water and chemicals into shale formations deep underground has been blamed for two minor earthquakes in the surrounding region. Environmental campaigners are calling for a halt to the drilling of what Cuadrilla believe could be significant reserves of natural gas. (Photo by Matthew Lloyd/Getty Images)

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PRESTON, LANCASHIRE - OCTOBER 07: Engineers look at the Cuadrilla shale fracking facility on October 7, 2012 in Preston, Lancashire. The controversial method of extracting gas by pumping high pressure water and chemicals into shale formations deep underground has been blamed for two minor earthquakes in the surrounding region. Environmental campaigners are calling for a halt to the drilling of what Cuadrilla believe could be significant reserves of natural gas. (Photo by Matthew Lloyd/Getty Images)

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PRESTON, LANCASHIRE - OCTOBER 07: A lump of shale rock on display at the Cuadrilla shale fracking facility on October 7, 2012 in Preston, Lancashire. The controversial method of extracting gas by pumping high pressure water and chemicals into shale formations deep underground has been blamed for two minor earthquakes in the surrounding region. Environmental campaigners are calling for a halt to the drilling of what Cuadrilla believe could be significant reserves of natural gas. (Photo by Matthew Lloyd/Getty Images)

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Hydraulic Fracturing Prevention Press Conference

NEW YORK, NY - APRIL 25: Actor/director Mark Ruffalo (C) speaks at the Hydraulic Fracturing prevention press conference urging the protection of the drinking water source of 15 million Americans at Foley Square on April 25, 2011 in New York City. (Photo by D Dipasupil/Getty Images)

Hydraulic Fracturing Prevention Press Conference

NEW YORK, NY - APRIL 25: (L-R) Actor/director Mark Ruffalo, Denise Katzman, Wenonah Hauter, and Water Defense co-founder/campaign director Claire Sandberg attend the Hydraulic Fracturing prevention press conference urging the protection of the drinking water source of 15 million Americans at Foley Square on April 25, 2011 in New York City. (Photo by D Dipasupil/Getty Images)

Josh Fox on Obama, the EPA, and House Republicans Who Had Him Arrested

HuffPost Green Editor Joanna Zelman talks to Josh Fox, director of the documentary 'Gasland,' about hydro-fracking, the EPA, and the House Republicans who had him arrested during a Congressional hearing.

Game Changer in Green: Mark Ruffalo

The expertise and the grassroots zeal Mark Ruffalo has brought to the issue of fracking is changing the game in green.

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**Vitter: USGS Says Hydraulic Fracturing is Safe in Fayetteville
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Applauds use of sound science, not ideology in study

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Reading: Vitter: USGS Says Hydraulic Fracturing is Safe in Fayetteville

BigNews.Biz - Jan 11,2013 - Vitter: USGS Says Hydraulic Fracturing is Safe in Fayetteville

Applauds use of sound science, not ideology in study

(Washington, D.C.) – U.S. Senator David Vitter (R-La.) made the following statement regarding news from the completed U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) study that examined the water quality of 127 shallow domestic wells in the Fayetteville Shale natural gas production area of Arkansas and found no groundwater contamination associated with gas production.

“The President and his administration have been trying to cripple hydraulic fracturing for years, even though domestic energy production has been one of the only bright spots in our economy, thanks in large part to the utilization of this technology,” Vitter said. “It’s certainly encouraging to see this positive result from a study using sound and transparent science to draw conclusions instead of ideology. The EPA’s mishaps with fabricating evidence in Texas, Pennsylvania, and Wyoming caused an unnecessary attack on an effective, efficient and safe method of developing domestic energy. Studies like these from the USGS help set the record straight.”

Recently Vitter sent a letter to President Obama highlighting how the United Kingdom is moving toward hydraulic fracturing because it works. Click here to read a copy of the letter.

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Live EPA update today on Fracturing and Produced Water Panel; Energy Water Solutions' Dr. Stewart on EPA frac flowback and produced water panel
Markets.financialcontent.com

01/11/2013

By: Energy Water Solutions via PR Newswire

WASHINGTON, Jan. 11, 2013 /PRNewswire/ -- David R. Stewart, PhD PE and Chief Science Officer of Energy Water Solutions in Houston Texas was invited to give feedback as an expert member on the Environmental Protection Agency's Frac Flowback and Produced Water Technical Roundtable. The EPA hosts an online update via live webinar on these issues today. Dr. Stewart was invited to Washington DC with other industry experts to meetings on September 15, 2012 of the Hydraulic Fracturing panel which was held at EPA Headquarters. This committee was formed at the request of Congress, and this morning there will be a live online update to "EPA's study of the Potential Impacts of Hydraulic Fracturing on Drinking Water Resources: Flowback and Produced Water Technical Roundtable". Dr. Stewart said, "Congress asked the EPA to study these issues, and our role is to discuss future regulations including using frac flowback and produced water for beneficial use". Dave Stewart has patented technologies and processes that work together for Energy Water Solutions clients to filter frac flowback and produced water and turn it to clean fresh water. This clean water still needs state legislation passed, to be ground discharged in some states for beneficial energy and agricultural uses.

Energy Water Solutions' Dr. Dave Stewart participated in several meetings on expert panels at the invitation of the EPA, to discuss how hydraulic fracturing could affect drinking water resources. Representative energy company participants on this EPA frac water committee include Chesapeake Energy Corporation, Chevron, HighMount, Newfield Energy, Range Resources, Southwestern Energy as well as regulatory officials from the Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining, Wyoming Oil and Gas Conservation Commission, Railroad Commission of Texas and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. You may see the list of expert participants on the frac flowback and produced water panel and their bios at: www.epa.gov/hfstudy/pdfs/flowback-bio.pdf

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Energy Water Solutions

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Houston, TX 77024

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KAZT-TV - Online**

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Murdock: Regulators find nothing scary about fracking **WaterWorld - Online**

01/11/2013

If frackophobes are to be believed, natural gas fracking is the most frightful environmental nightmare since Japan's Fukushima nuclear power plant melted down after an earthquake and tsunami.

In "Promised Land," Matt Damon's new anti-fracking movie -- funded in part by the United Arab Emirates -- one character demonstrates this production technique's "dangers" by drenching a toy farm with household chemicals and then setting it ablaze.

In the upcoming pro-fracking film, "Fracknation," one Pennsylvania homeowner absurdly claims that fracking polluted his well water with weapons-grade uranium.

In a New Yorkers Against Fracking agitprop poster, the Statue of Liberty furiously topples natural gas drilling towers with her torch as energy company 18-wheelers flee in horror.

These warnings might be believable if fracking regulators seemed even slightly worried. Instead, federal and state environmental officials appear positively serene about hydraulic fracturing, a decades-old technology that uses sand and chemically treated water to shatter shale deposits far below the water table and liberate natural gas from the ruptured rocks.

-- "In no case have we made a definitive determination that the fracking process has caused chemicals to enter groundwater," Environmental Protection Agency administrator Lisa Jackson said last April. In May 2011, she testified on Capitol Hill: "I'm not aware of any proven case where the fracking process itself has affected water."

The EPA tested drinking water in Dimock, Pa., which ecologists claim fracking has tainted. "EPA has determined that there are not levels of contaminants present that would require additional action by the agency," it concluded last July.

-- "A study that examined the water quality of 127 shallow domestic wells in the Fayetteville Shale natural gas production area of Arkansas found no groundwater contamination associated with gas production," the U.S. Geological Survey announced Wednesday.

-- "Significant adverse impacts on human health are not expected from routine HVHF," or high-volume hydraulic fracturing, according to a February 2012 preliminary report from New York's Department of Environmental Conservation. New York Democratic Gov. Andrew Cuomo has pondered this issue since 2010 and promises further contemplation, including another draft of what DEC now calls an "outdated summary."

"New York would be crazy not to lift the moratorium" against fracking, former Pennsylvania Gov. Ed Rendell, a Democrat, told the New York Post in November. The former Democratic national chairman continued: "I told Gov. Cuomo I would come to testify before any legislative committee ... It's a good thing to do."

-- "We have never had any cases of groundwater contamination from hydraulic fracturing," Elizabeth Ames Jones said in 2011. The then-Chairman of the Texas Railroad Commission, which supervises natural gas, added: "It is geologically impossible for fracturing fluid to reach an aquifer a thousand feet above."

-- While California last month unveiled new disclosure and monitoring rules for fracking, State Oil & Gas Supervisor Tim Kustic told the San Jose Mercury News: "There is no evidence of harm from fracking in groundwater in California at this

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point in time. And it has been going on for many years."

-- "We've used hydraulic fracturing for some 60 years in Oklahoma, and we have no confirmed cases where it is responsible for drinking water contamination -- nor do any of the other natural gas-producing states," Corporation Commission Chairman Bob Anthony wrote in August 2010.

-- "In the 41 years that I have supervised oil and gas exploration, production and development in South Dakota, no documented case of water-well or aquifer damage by the fracking of oil or gas wells, has been brought to my attention," said the Department of Environment's Fred Steece. "Nor am I aware of any such cases before my time." Steece commented in a June 2009 New York DEC document that cites regulators from 15 states who identified zero examples of fracking-related water pollution.

The Americans quoted here are neither gas company executives nor natural gas publicists. These are public servants who oversee this industry, and many work or have worked for red-tape-loving Democrats. Nonetheless, they are unafraid of fracking. Thus, frackophobes have nothing to offer but fear itself.

(Deroy Murdock is a columnist with Scripps Howard News Service and a media fellow with the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace at Stanford University. Email him at deroy.Murdock@gmail.com)

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Ed Cowsar, Executive VP Sales and Marketing

Energy Water Solutions

800 Town & Country Boulevard, Suite 300

Houston, TX 77024

512.970.4481

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or visit www.energywatersolutions.com

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5 Reasons Natural Gas Won't Be an Environmental and Economic Savior AlterNet

01/11/2013

We aren't going to be able to drill our way out of the climate crisis without creating an even bigger mess in the process.

This article was published in partnership with GlobalPossibilities.org.

If you're hoping the natural gas boom means we've solved our environmental and economic woes, you're going to be disappointed. While natural gas produces less nitrogen oxides and carbon dioxide when burned compared to coal or oil, the end product is only part of the story. The natural gas boom in recent years has been fueled by extreme extraction methods like fracking that are posing a new slurry of environmental problems before the gas even makes it to consumers.

If you look at the complete picture of how we extract natural gas today, you begin to realize pretty quickly that we aren't going to be able to drill our way out of the climate crisis without creating an even bigger mess in the process. The list of impacts from fracking is huge, but here are five to kick off the conversation:

1. Methane

Natural gas may release less pollution when burned, but it still may be a significant contributor to global warming pollution after all because we must take into account what happens during extraction, too. "Scientists are once again reporting alarmingly high methane emissions from an oil and gas field, underscoring questions about the environmental benefits of the boom in natural-gas production that is transforming the US energy system," writes Jeff Tollefson for Nature. He explains:

The researchers, who hold joint appointments with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the University of Colorado in Boulder, first sparked concern in February 2012 with a study suggesting that up to 4% of the methane produced at a field near Denver was escaping into the atmosphere. If methane — a potent greenhouse gas — is leaking from fields across the country at similar rates, it could be offsetting much of the climate benefit of the ongoing shift from coal- to gas-fired plants for electricity generation.

Industry officials and some scientists contested the claim, but at an American Geophysical Union (AGU) meeting in San Francisco, California, last month, the research team reported new Colorado data that support the earlier work, as well as preliminary results from a field study in the Uinta Basin of Utah suggesting even higher rates of methane leakage — an eye-popping 9% of the total production. That figure is nearly double the cumulative loss rates estimated from industry data — which are already higher in Utah than in Colorado.

When it comes to climate change, leaking methane is a big deal. The EPA reports, "Pound for pound, the comparative impact of CH₄ [methane] on climate change is over 20 times greater than CO₂ over a 100-year period.

2. Water Pollution

Methane released during fracking doesn't just end up in the air, but also in the water. By now you've likely already seen the videos of people living near gas drilling operations who can light their water on fire as it comes out of the tap. (If you haven't then it's time to see "Gasland.") In 2011 the United States Geological Survey released a report about water in Pavillion, Wyoming where residents complained about water quality after drilling. Here's what they found:

EPA's analysis of samples taken from the Agency's deep monitoring wells in the aquifer indicates detection of synthetic

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chemicals, like glycols and alcohols consistent with gas production and hydraulic fracturing fluids, benzene concentrations well above Safe Drinking Water Act standards and high methane levels. Given the area's complex geology and the proximity of drinking water wells to ground water contamination, EPA is concerned about the movement of contaminants within the aquifer and the safety of drinking water wells over time.

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KCTV-TV - Online**

01/11/2013

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Energy Water Solutions

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Houston, TX 77024

512.970.4481

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Deroy Murdock: Who's Afraid of Fracking?
National Review - Online

01/11/2013

New on NRO . . .

January 11, 2013 12:00 A.M.

Who's Afraid of Fracking?

Public servants who seek fracking-related pollution have yet to find any.

A billboard in New York advertises "FrackNation."

If frackophobes are to be believed, natural-gas fracking is the most frightful environmental nightmare since Japan's Fukushima nuclear-power plant melted down amid an earthquake and tsunami in March 2011.

In *Promised Land*, Matt Damon's new anti-fracking film funded by the United Arab Emirates, one character demonstrates this production technique's "dangers" by drenching a toy farm with household chemicals and then setting it ablaze.

In the upcoming pro-fracking film, *FrackNation*, one Pennsylvania homeowner absurdly claims that fracking polluted his well water with weapons-grade uranium. (For details, watch AXS-TV on Tuesday, January 22, at 9 p.m. EST.)

In an agitprop poster from the group New Yorkers Against Fracking, the Statue of Liberty furiously topples natural-gas drilling towers with her torch as energy-company big rigs flee in horror.

These warnings might be believable if fracking regulators seemed even slightly worried. Instead, federal and state environmental officials appear positively serene about hydraulic fracturing, a decades-old technology that uses sand and chemically treated water to shatter shale deposits 5,000 to 8,000 feet below the water table and liberate natural gas from the ruptured rocks.

"In no case have we made a definitive determination that the fracking process has caused chemicals to enter groundwater," Environmental Protection Agency administrator Lisa Jackson stated last April. In May 2011, she told the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: "I'm not aware of any proven case where the fracking process itself has affected water."

The EPA tested drinking water in Dimock, Pa., which ecologists claim fracking has tainted. "EPA has determined that there are not levels of contaminants present that would require additional action by the Agency," it concluded last July. Regional administrator Shawn M. Garvin added: "The Agency has used the best available scientific data to provide clarity to Dimock residents and address their concerns about the safety of their drinking water."

"A study that examined the water quality of 127 shallow domestic wells in the Fayetteville Shale natural-gas production area of Arkansas found no groundwater contamination associated with gas production," the U.S. Geological Survey announced Wednesday. "Methane is the primary component of natural gas," the report observed. "What methane was found in the water, taken from domestic wells, was either naturally occurring, or could not be attributed to natural gas production activities." USGS director Marcia McNutt elaborated: "This new study is important in terms of finding no significant effects on groundwater quality from shale gas development within the area of sampling."

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"Significant adverse impacts on human health are not expected from routine HVHF," or high-volume hydraulic fracturing, according to a February 2012 preliminary report from New York's Department of Environmental Conservation. Governor Andrew Cuomo (D., N.Y.) has pondered this issue since 2010 and promises further contemplation, including another draft of what DEC now calls an "outdated summary ."

"New York would be crazy not to lift the moratorium" against fracking, former governor Ed Rendell (D., Pa.) told the New York Post in November. The former chairman of the Democratic National Committee continued: "I told Governor Cuomo I would come to testify before any legislative committee. . . . It's a good thing to do."

"I do find it stunningly hypocritical to buy gas that comes from fracking wells somewhere [else] in the U.S. and then say fracking is bad," John Hanger, Rendell's former secretary of environmental protection, remarked in the Post. "If you're saying no to gas, you're saying yes to more coal and oil." Hanger, a Keystone State Democratic gubernatorial contender, lately lauded the benefits of gas fracking:

Using more natural gas has slashed US carbon emissions and toxic air pollution - lead, mercury, arsenic, soot - in the nation's air by displacing large amounts of coal and oil. That cleaner air saves thousands of lives every year. And no nation in the world has cut its carbon emissions more than the US since 2006. Indeed, thanks in substantial part to shale gas, US carbon emissions are back to 1995 levels and fell about another 4 percent in 2012.

"We have never had any cases of groundwater contamination from hydraulic fracturing," Elizabeth Ames Jones said in 2011. The then-chairman of the Texas Railroad Commission, which supervises natural gas, added: "It is geologically impossible for fracturing fluid to reach an aquifer a thousand feet above."

"We have drilled 3,500 wells in Arkansas and explored every complaint of a compromised well," Lawrence Bengal, director of the state's Oil and Gas Commission, noted in 2011. "We have found no fracturing fluid in any of those well complaints."

While California last month unveiled new disclosure and monitoring rules for fracking, Tim Kustic, the Golden State's oil-and-gas supervisor, told the San Jose Mercury News: "There is no evidence of harm from fracking in groundwater in California at this point in time. And it has been going on for many years."

"We've used hydraulic fracturing for some 60 years in Oklahoma, and we have no confirmed cases where it is responsible for drinking water contamination - nor do any of the other natural gas-producing states," Bob Anthony, chairman of the state's public-utilities commission, wrote in August 2010.

"In the 41 years that I have supervised oil and gas exploration, production, and development in South Dakota, no documented case of water-well or aquifer damage by the fracking of oil or gas wells, has been brought to my attention," said the Department of Environment's Fred Steece. "Nor am I aware of any such cases before my time." Steece commented in a June 2009 New York DEC document that cites regulators from 15 states who identified zero examples of fracking-related water pollution.

"Facts matter," says Robert Bryce, a Manhattan Institute senior fellow and author of four books on energy. "Over the past six decades, the fracturing process has been used more than 1 million times on American oil and gas wells. If it were as dangerous as the anti-drilling/anti-hydraulic fracturing crowd claims, then hundreds, perhaps thousands, of water wells would have been contaminated by now. That hasn't happened." Adds Bryce, who also appears in FrackNation: "The simple truth is that the shale revolution is the best possible news for the U.S. economy, and it's coming at a time when good economic news is desperately needed."

The officials quoted here are neither gas-company executives nor petro-publicists. These are public servants who oversee this industry, and many work or have worked for red-tape-loving Democrats. Nonetheless, they are unafraid of

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

fracking. Clearly, frackophobes have nothing to offer but fear itself.

- New York commentator Deroy Murdock is a Fox News contributor, a nationally syndicated columnist with the Scripps Howard News Service, and a media fellow with the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution, and Peace at Stanford University.

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512.970.4481

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Regulators find nothing scary about fracking
Reporter - Online, The

01/11/2013

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Posted: Thursday, 01/10/13 06:19 pm

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Story Ideas

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If frackophobes are to be believed, natural gas fracking is the most frightful environmental nightmare since Japan's Fukushima nuclear power plant melted down after an earthquake and tsunami.

In *Promised Land*, Matt Damon's new anti-fracking movie — funded in part by the United Arab Emirates — one character demonstrates this production technique's dangers by drenching a toy farm with household chemicals and then setting it ablaze.

In the upcoming pro-fracking film, *Fracknation*, one Pennsylvania homeowner absurdly claims that fracking polluted his well water with weapons-grade uranium.

In a New Yorkers Against Fracking agitprop poster, the Statue of Liberty furiously topples natural gas drilling towers with her torch as energy company 18-wheelers flee in horror.

RELATED ASSETS

These warnings might be believable if fracking regulators seemed even slightly worried. Instead, federal and state environmental officials appear positively serene about hydraulic fracturing, a decades-old technology that uses sand and chemically treated water to shatter shale deposits far below the water table and liberate natural gas from the ruptured rocks.

In no case have we made a definitive determination that the fracking process has caused chemicals to enter groundwater, Environmental Protection Agency administrator Lisa Jackson said last April. In May 2011, she testified on Capitol Hill: I'm not aware of any proven case where the fracking process itself has affected water.

The EPA tested drinking water in Dimock, Pa., which ecologists claim fracking has tainted. EPA has determined that there are not levels of contaminants present that would require additional action by the agency, it concluded last July.

A study that examined the water quality of 127 shallow domestic wells in the Fayetteville Shale natural gas production area of Arkansas found no groundwater contamination associated with gas production, the U.S. Geological Survey announced Wednesday. Significant adverse impacts on human health are not expected from routine HVHF, or high-volume hydraulic fracturing, according to a February 2012 preliminary report from New York's Department of Environmental Conservation. New York Democratic Gov. Andrew Cuomo has pondered this issue since 2010 and promises further contemplation, including another draft of what DEC now calls an outdated summary.

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New York would be crazy not to lift the moratorium against fracking, former Pennsylvania Gov. Ed Rendell, a Democrat, told the New York Post in November. The former Democratic national chairman continued: I told Gov. Cuomo I would come to testify before any legislative committee ... It's a good thing to do.

We have never had any cases of groundwater contamination from hydraulic fracturing, Elizabeth Ames Jones said in 2011. The then-Chairman of the Texas Railroad Commission, which supervises natural gas, added: It is geologically impossible for fracturing fluid to reach an aquifer a thousand feet above.

While California last month unveiled new disclosure and monitoring rules for fracking, State Oil & Gas Supervisor Tim Kustic told the San Jose Mercury News: There is no evidence of harm from fracking in groundwater in California at this point in time. And it has been going on for many years.

We've used hydraulic fracturing for some 60 years in Oklahoma, and we have no confirmed cases where it is responsible for drinking water contamination nor do any of the other natural gas-producing states, Corporation Commission Chairman Bob Anthony wrote in August 2010.

In the 41 years that I have supervised oil and gas exploration, production and development in South Dakota, no documented case of water-well or aquifer damage by the fracking of oil or gas wells, has been brought to my attention, said the Department of Environment's Fred Steece. Nor am I aware of any such cases before my time. Steece commented in a June 2009 New York DEC document that cites regulators from 15 states who identified zero examples of fracking-related water pollution.

The Americans quoted here are neither gas company executives nor natural gas publicists. These are public servants who oversee this industry, and many work or have worked for red-tape-loving Democrats. Nonetheless, they are unafraid of fracking. Thus, frackophobes have nothing to offer but fear itself.

Deroy Murdock is a columnist with Scripps Howard News Service and a media fellow with the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace at Stanford University.

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EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

**Live EPA update today on Fracturing and Produced Water Panel; Energy Water Solutions' Dr. Stewart on EPA frac flowback and produced water panel
KXVO-TV - Online**

01/11/2013

SOURCE Energy Water Solutions

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EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

**E&ENews PM
Land Letter**

01/11/2013

1. HYDRAULIC FRACTURING:

EPA delaying Pavillion case for 8 months

U.S. EPA is delaying its work on the Pavillion, Wyo., water pollution case by more than eight months, angering both sides in the bitter debate about whether drilling and hydraulic fracturing contaminated drinking water in the area. Neither the people who say their water is contaminated nor the company involved, Encana Corp., wanted the delay. Representatives of both sides today criticized the decision. [Go to story #1](#)

THIS AFTERNOON'S STORIES

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WTVM-TV - Online**

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MarketWatch**

01/11/2013

press release

Jan. 11, 2013, 12:01 a.m. EST

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AGENCIES EXPAND FRACKING RESEARCH PANEL TO ADD HHS, WEIGH GHG IMPACTS Inside EPA Weekly Report

01/11/2013

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is joining EPA and the Departments of Energy (DOE) and Interior (DOI) on a steering committee coordinating federal research on the environmental effects of hydraulic fracturing, according to Glen Paulson, EPA's science advisor.

Paulson also indicated for the first time that the panel plans to consider the greenhouse gas (GHG) impacts of the drilling practice, acknowledging the considerable controversy surrounding EPA's estimates of how much methane is released during the fracking process.

EPA, DOE and DOI signed an memorandum of understanding (MOU) last April outlining plans to align their research, beginning in fiscal year 2013, on shale gas development -- but the research is still in the planning stages given the lack of a final FY13 budget.

But Paulson told a Jan. 8 Science to Achieve Results (STAR) grant research webinar that HHS will be joining the group because members of the steering committee recognized that "medical and certain kinds of environmental health expertise" was needed on the panel.

"We were asked to reach out to HHS," Paulson said, adding that Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, National Institute for Occupational Safety & Health and other agencies housed within the auspices of HHS would now be represented on the steering committee.

But the addition is likely to draw fire from congressional Republicans, who last month criticized the agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry's (ATSDR's) -- part of HHS -- over its plans to study health risks related to shale gas development.

In a Nov. 30 letter to HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius, House Energy & Commerce Committee Chairman Fred Upton (R-MI) and other committee leaders took issue with recent statements from ATSDR's director, Chris Portier, saying they call "into question whether a study under his leadership can be objectively and validly conducted." Among other things, Portier has allegedly said that shale gas development "has been a disaster" in some areas and that anecdotal evidence of environmentally induced illness warrants a "more serious and systematic approach to studying it."

The GOP lawmakers urged Sebelius to consult with state health officials before proceeding with the study.

The addition of health agencies to the steering committee could also tamp down tensions with EPA as officials had been jockeying over which agency would lead efforts to address health risks of fracking.

For example, Portier during an Institute of Medicine meeting last April, touted a strong role for CDC in studying human health risks from shale gas drilling, saying that "CDC is America's public health agency and we've put the boots on the ground" to address those risks. But also during that meeting, EPA Deputy Administrator Bob Perciasepe highlighted a strong role for EPA in assessing public health risks from shale gas development, seeking to "clarify" EPA's role as a public health agency through its maintenance of strong environmental health protections and saying, "Our primary role is public health" (Inside EPA, May 2).

EPA, DOI and DOE generally detailed their plans in their FY13 budgets for millions of dollars in new funds to research a host of issues related to the effects of fracking, including seismicity, environmental quality and other issues.

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

The MOU, which the agencies signed April 18, establishes a plan for ensuring that each agency is focused on fracking studies that do not overlap with one another while allowing for collaboration and emphasizing the core competencies of each agency. For example, EPA's work will focus on human health risks, water quality impacts and air emissions associated with fracking, while DOE's research is more centered on wellbore integrity studies and technologies aimed at reducing environmental impacts. The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), part of DOI, will focus on ecological risks, land use and wildlife habitat issues, hydrology concerns and seismic risks.

Paulson, however, gave additional details of the agencies' research plans during the Jan. 8 call, saying that areas of focus would include water quality and availability, ecological impacts, effects on human health and communities, induced seismicity and air emissions -- specifically GHG releases associated with shale gas drilling.

Paulson noted that there has been considerable controversy surrounding EPA's estimates of how much methane is released during the fracking process, though he did not elaborate.

Many industry and GOP lawmakers have criticized EPA's estimates as overstating the amount of methane released into the atmosphere from fracking activities.

Meanwhile, EPA is suggesting that the administration add the National Science Foundation (NSF) to an even broader interagency group on fracking because it would provide additional funding for research.

The interagency group was created by Executive Order (EO) 13605, which President Obama issued April 13. The group is charged with coordinating administration policy and research activities related to fracking to avoid duplication.

The working group, which one state source previously told Inside EPA had fallen silent prior to the election, consists of the deputy heads of 13 federal entities, including EPA, DOI, DOE, the departments of Defense, Health and Human Services and Commerce, and several White House offices, including the Office of Management & Budget, Office of Science & Technology Policy and Council on Environmental Quality.

Paulson told the Jan. 8 webinar that "hopefully NSF will be added to the high level executive group" because that would open more funding opportunities given the lengthy list of fracking-related research that NSF is currently doing. -- Bridget DiCosmo

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EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

EPA extends comment period for Pavillion study Associated Press (AP) - Cheyenne Bureau

01/11/2013

CASPER, Wyo._The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has once again extended the public comment period for its study of groundwater pollution in a central Wyoming gas field.

The comment period for the EPA investigation in Pavillion was scheduled to end Tuesday but has been extended until Sept. 30. The comment period was extended twice last year.

The EPA theorized over a year ago that hydraulic fracturing may have played a role in the pollution. The federal agency says the longer comment period will allow more time for people to weigh in on the testing.

The Casper Star-Tribune reports both a landowner with contaminated groundwater and the owner of the Pavillion gas field, Encana Oil and Gas, object to extending the comment period. Both sides say they want the studies to wrap up.

Information from: Casper (Wyo.) Star-Tribune, <http://www.trib.com>

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EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

HOUSE REPUBLICANS CREATE NEW PANELS TO TARGET ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATIONS

Inside EPA Weekly Report

01/11/2013

House Republicans have created several new subcommittees for the 113th Congress to oversee EPA rules and federal environmental review requirements that GOP lawmakers say are undercutting energy production and harming the economy.

The House Oversight and Government Reform Committee announced Jan. 3 that it is creating a new Energy Policy, Health Care and Entitlements Subcommittee, to be chaired by Rep. James Lankford (R-OK), that will examine "excessive federal regulations strangling our energy industry and the many businesses that depend on them," according to statements from Lankford and Rep. Darrell Issa (R-CA), the chairman of the full House Oversight Committee.

The panel appears likely to provide Republicans with another platform from which to scrutinize federal regulations on the energy sectors.

"Chairman Lankford will be leading our committee's efforts to conduct oversight over federal governments affecting energy production the jobs this growing sector creates," Issa says in a statement released by Lankford's office. Lankford in the statement notes that "Oklahoma is home to oil and gas, wind and coal industries, all of which play a critical role in helping our nation reach energy independence."

The chairmanship signals a continuation of efforts by Lankford to target EPA activities and urge increased energy production. Lankford during the previous Congress was one of several lawmakers who backed legislation to curb EPA's use of a "sue and settle" tactic, in which the agency agrees to craft regulations after it has been sued by environmentalists.

In addition, Lankford has criticized the scope of EPA guidance on use of diesel fuel in fracking operations.

The Oklahoma lawmaker was also one of several energy state legislators that in 2012 urged the Department of Energy to expeditiously approve liquified natural gas terminals for export of shale gas.

In addition to the new oversight panel, House Natural Resources Committee Chairman Doc Hastings (R-WA) announced late last month that he has created a new Public Lands and Environmental Regulation Subcommittee to replace the National Parks, Forests and Public Lands Subcommittee. The new panel, which will be chaired by Rep. Rob Bishop (R-UT), who had chaired the parks subcommittee, will enjoy broader oversight as Hastings transferred jurisdiction for issues related to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) from the full committee to the subcommittee.

"The establishment of this Subcommittee will allow this [NEPA oversight] authority to be exercised in a more focused manner," Hastings said in a Dec. 20 statement. "Moving jurisdiction of NEPA to a specific Subcommittee will allow us to better review and address how this law is being implemented and the impacts its bureaucratic red-tape has on jobs, our economy and access to public lands and resources."

Creation of the new NEPA oversight panel is drawing praise from industry groups. Dustin Van Liew, executive director of the Public Lands Council and director of federal lands for the National Cattlemen's Beef Association, welcomed Bishop's new focus on NEPA because "NEPA reform will be a priority issue for us moving forward."

Additionally, Republicans have split the House science committee's energy and environment subcommittee into two

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

separate panels, a move that suggests the GOP is seeking to ratchet up oversight and policy action in those two areas -- though the committee has not yet determined how to divide certain EPA-related matters between the panels.

Rep. Andy Harris (R-MD), who criticized EPA's science advisory processes and the science underlying the agency's air regulations and hydraulic fracturing studies last Congress as energy and environment chairman, will head up the newly created environment subcommittee in the 113th Congress, according to a Jan. 8 science panel press release.

The new energy panel's chairwoman will be Rep. Cynthia Lummis (R-WY), who has called for more judicial oversight of agency science and risk assessments and whose state has become an epicenter of environmental debates over hydraulic fracturing.

A GOP science committee source says new full panel Chairman Lamar Smith (R-TX) "believes the issues covered by the Energy and Environment Subcommittee are important enough to each have their own focus in a subcommittee." That reasoning suggests that oversight and legislative action on EPA matters will at least continue at the same pace in this Congress, if not increase.

Activities with little to no overlap with energy -- such as chemical risk assessment and EPA science advisory activities -- appear likely candidates to stay with Harris on the environment subcommittee. But it is unclear which panel will have primary oversight of EPA policies and science directly affecting the energy sector, such as certain air regulations and the agency's pending study of fracking and drinking water. The GOP source declined to comment on that matter.

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EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

**Live EPA update today on Fracturing and Produced Water Panel; Energy Water Solutions' Dr. Stewart on EPA frac flowback and produced water panel
Associated Press (AP)**

01/11/2013

/FROM PR NEWSWIRE DALLAS 888-776-3971/

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TO BUSINESS EDITORS:

Live EPA update today on Fracturing and Produced Water Panel; Energy
Water Solutions' Dr. Stewart on EPA frac flowback and produced water
panel

WASHINGTON, Jan. 11, 2013 /PRNewswire/ -- David R. Stewart, PhD PE and
Chief Science Officer of Energy Water Solutions in Houston Texas was
invited to give feedback as an expert member on the Environmental
Protection Agency's Frac Flowback and Produced Water Technical
Roundtable. The EPA hosts an online update via live webinar on these
issues today. Dr. Stewart was invited to Washington DC with other
industry experts to meetings on September 15, 2012 of the Hydraulic
Fracturing panel which was held at EPA Headquarters. This committee
was formed at the request of Congress, and this morning there will be
a live online update to "EPA's study of the Potential Impacts of
Hydraulic Fracturing on Drinking Water Resources: Flowback and
Produced Water Technical Roundtable". Dr. Stewart said, "Congress
asked the EPA to study these issues, and our role is to discuss future
regulations including using frac flowback and produced water for

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

beneficial use". Dave Stewart has patented technologies and processes that work together for Energy Water Solutions clients to filter frac flowback and produced water and turn it to clean fresh water. This clean water still needs state legislation passed, to be ground discharged in some states for beneficial energy and agricultural uses.

Energy Water Solutions' Dr. Dave Stewart participated in several meetings on expert panels at the invitation of the EPA, to discuss how hydraulic fracturing could affect drinking water resources.

Representative energy company participants on this EPA frack water committee include Chesapeake Energy Corporation, Chevron, HighMount, Newfield Energy, Range Resources, Southwestern Energy as well as regulatory officials from the Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining, Wyoming Oil and Gas Conservation Commission, Railroad Commission of Texas and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

You may see the list of expert participants on the frac flowback and produced water panel and their bios at:

<http://www.epa.gov/hfstudy/pdfs/flowback-bio.pdf>

The Environmental Protection Agency has scheduled a public webinar for today January 11, 2013 at 9:00 AM Central time as an update to the Hydraulic Fracturing Study progress report. To register for this public webinar please login to: <http://www.cluin.org/conf/tio/FRACJan11/>

Energy Water Solutions is a Houston Texas firm with leadership from energy, water and technology backgrounds from Conoco-Phillips, BP, Accenture, Siemens, Stewart Environmental and SAP. EWS filters produced water for oil and gas producers with scalable water

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

filtration systems close to the well head, immediately lowering
production costs and creating incremental fresh water for beneficial
use in oil field and agricultural applications.

For a copy of available documents or more information, please contact:

Ed Cowsar, Executive VP Sales and Marketing Energy Water Solutions 800

Town & Country Boulevard, Suite 300 Houston, TX 77024 512.970.4481

ed.cowsar@energywatersolutions.com or visit

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EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

**Really frackin' good doc
New York Post
New York, NY
Kyle Smith
01/11/2013**

IF you get an Oscar nomination for fearmongering based on rumors and lies, what do you get for debunking the Oscar nominee? Nothing, probably, but Phelim McAleer, who in "FrackNation" gleefully shreds assertions made in the anti-fracking documentary "Gasland," should be content to have struck a blow for truth. "Gasland," by Josh Fox, was an elegiac, effective and extravagantly misleading warning about the supposed dangers of hydraulic fracturing for clean-burning natural gas, which amounts to our own underground domestic Saudi Arabia of fuel. Thanks in part to Fox's stunts, such as lighting tap water on fire, there are several moratoria on fracking, including in New York state - which just leaked an environmental report concluding that fracking is safe.

McAleer, a whimsical Irish journalist with a pleasingly avuncular air, explains in a robustly entertaining and informative doc how Fox was wrong to imply fracking is unregulated and proves methane has been in some drinking water since long before fracking. McAleer is more journalist than poet, so his film doesn't have the emotional impact of Fox's. And he goes off on an odd tangent or two, such as when he illustrates energy's importance with the tale of a friend who donated a kidney. (The point is that surgery uses a lot of electricity, but who disputes that?) He also implies, without furnishing evidence, that Vladimir Putin is funding the anti-fracking lobby. Still, McAleer is an expert practitioner of cinematic jujitsu. He interviews dairy farmers whose generations-old businesses are endangered - by fracking moratoria, which are keeping them from getting the checks they need to stay afloat. And in a spoof of a scene in "Gasland," McAleer gets Fox on the phone. Click! Voice mail. It doesn't look good when a documentarian refuses to answer questions. Even worse for the -anti-frackers: a star of Fox's film, who claims her drinking water in Dimock, Pa., is contaminated despite an EPA ruling that it's fine, refuses McAleer's mild-mannered request for a water sample, then lambastes him for being a foreigner and declares, "I am armed, I will tell you that."

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EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

**EPA to release sample results from fracking study
Ithaca Journal - Online**

01/10/2013

SCRANTON, PA. — Federal environmental regulators say they'll release preliminary results from water sampling at sites in Pennsylvania and across the nation as part of their study of the potential impact of fracking.

Jeanne Briskin, the Environmental Protection Agency's hydraulic fracturing research coordinator, said Friday that sampling results have been analyzed and will be posted on the EPA website within weeks, according a report in The Times-Tribune of Scranton.

Fracking is the process that drilling companies use to stimulate oil and gas production from deep shale formations like the Marcellus Shale. The EPA is trying to determine if the fracking process pollutes water supplies. The industry and many states say the process is safe when done properly, but critics dispute that.

The agency's final report won't be released until 2014.

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

Lankford to look for efficiencies on energy subcommittee
TMCnet.com

01/10/2013

[January 09, 2013]

EDMOND, Jan 09, 2013 (The Edmond Sun - McClatchy-Tribune Information Services via COMTEX) -- Congressman James Lankford's new House leadership role will allow him to strive for efficiencies in a broad number of government agencies.

Lankford announced his selection last week as the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform subcommittee chairman on EPA regulation of energy production, health care and entitlement reforms.

"It is the one committee that can go into any agency and examine are we following protocol process correctly," said Lankford, R-Edmond.

Lankford will evaluate safeguards to prevent fraud in Medicare as well as whether entitlements such as free cell phones provided by the government are beneficial in balance with fraud.

He will also be investigating whether the permitting process for hydraulic fracturing is being handled properly. This will involve the federal government's permitting process in what is a state's responsibility.

"It's not just oil and gas. It will be wind, bio and solar," Lankford said. "If it's energy production it will come through my committee." Lankford said he is confident that energy companies are doing their best to produce energy safely for the country. There are risks with any type of manufacturing, Lankford said.

He cautioned that the EPA is preparing to attack energy production on water and air. The EPA was scheduled to release its water study in 2012.

"I have my suspicions as to why they failed to do that on schedule," Lankford said. "The second thing they're going after is the release of methane." Lankford said he is confident the technology is in place for a safe and reliable source of energy derived from hydraulic fracturing, or "fracking." Some EPA estimates indicate that as much as 10 percent of the methane gas in the atmosphere is being released as a result of fracking.

"The model they use for the release of methane is a little absurd. If they release that much in the atmosphere, every amount they release in the atmosphere is lost money," Lankford said.

There will be only a small amount of released methane into the atmosphere, he said. Producers have assured him directly they are doing everything they can to capture the methane, he added.

"It's a reasonable thing to do for the protection of all Americans," Lankford said. "My statement is not that there's nothing that should be done for regulation. I am all for regulating an industry for safety and for consistent competition." Lankford said he does not agree with arbitrary regulations that promote a single agenda other than an agenda of energy independence. The first achievable step is North American energy independence, he said.

"I think that is achievable in the next 10 years," Lankford said. "And then after that, we can purchase energy where we want to purchase energy. If it's cheaper in Brazil to buy it, we could, but we won't have to." The subcommittee also deals with health care entitlements. Providers are taking a hit on Medicare. People on Medicare are frustrated when trying to

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

find a physician who will take Medicare, Lankford said.

"The federal government is now so hard on providers that fewer doctors want to accept Medicare and fewer hospitals want to deal with it. And I think that's wrong," Lankford said.

jcoburn@edmondsun.com -- 341-2121 ____ (c)2013 The Edmond Sun (Edmond, Okla.) Visit The Edmond Sun (Edmond, Okla.) at www.edmondsun.com Distributed by MCT Information Services

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

USGS study finds no water problems in Arkansas fracking Washington Examiner - Online

01/10/2013

January 10, 2013 | 4:15 pm | Modified: January 10, 2013 at 4:20 pm

"Promised Land," a movie critical of hydraulic fracturing and starring Matt Damon, has not been a commercial success. (AP Photo)

The Washington Examiner The Washington Examiner

A study of 127 shallow gas wells drilled in Arkansas found no evidence that the use of hydraulic fracturing resulted in contamination of area groundwater supplies, the United States Geological Survey said today.

"This new study is important in terms of finding no significant effects on groundwater quality from shale gas development within the area of sampling," said USGS Director Marcia McNutt.

"None of the data that we have looked at as part of this study suggests that any groundwater contamination is resulting from natural gas production activities," said USGS hydrologist Tim Kresse. "However, this study does not speak to other wells that were not sampled, every chemical used during the hydraulic fracturing process, or water quality changes that might take longer to occur. It does provide a baseline to use to evaluate any possible changes in the future."

The study focused on levels of chloride found in the samples because chloride is typically found in groundwater in areas experiencing natural gas production.

"Chloride moves easily through groundwater without reacting with other ions or compounds in solution, making it is a good indicator of whether chemicals used during hydraulic fracturing are reaching groundwater. In this case, the chloride concentrations from this study were not higher than samples taken from nearby areas from 1951 through 1983," the USGS said in a statement.

The USGS study focused on samples taken from the Fayetteville Shale gas production area near Little Rock. The USGS stressed that the results of the study apply on to the samples taken from that area and do not reflect conditions that may or may not be found in other drilling areas.

Hydraulic fracturing - or "fracking" - is a process used by energy engineers for more than 60 years in which a solution of water and chemicals is injected into shale formations deep underground. Doing this often creates access to substantial deposits of oil and natural gas that would otherwise be unreachable.

The use of fracking in Pennsylvania, Texas and North Dakota has been a major factor in the unexpected growth of U.S. oil and gas production in recent years.

"The Fayetteville Shale serves as an unconventional gas reservoir across parts of six counties in north-central Arkansas, ranging in thickness from approximately 50 to 550 feet and varying in depth from approximately 1,500 to 6,500 feet below the ground surface. Drilling and production of gas wells began in 2004 and, as of April 2012, approximately 4,000 producing gas wells had been completed in the Fayetteville Shale," the USGS said.

Sen. David Vitter of Louisiana, the ranking minority member of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, noted the contrast between the USGS findings and those of studies by the Environmental Protection Agency in other

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

parts of the country.

"The president and his administration have been trying to cripple hydraulic fracturing for years, even though domestic energy production has been one of the only bright spots in our economy, thanks in large part to the utilization of this technology," Vitter said. "It's certainly encouraging to see this positive result from a study using sound and transparent science to draw conclusions instead of ideology. The EPA's mishaps with fabricating evidence in Texas, Pennsylvania, and Wyoming caused an unnecessary attack on an effective, efficient and safe method of developing domestic energy. Studies like these from the USGS help set the record straight."

The USGS study's release came shortly after a much-touted movie about fracking starring Matt Damon and John Krasinski proved to be a box office failure. The movie, which portrays the hydraulic fracking process in a critical light, only brought in \$4.3 million on its first weekend of widespread release.

See the complete USGS study in the embedded viewer below this story. Information about the EPA's fracking study can be found [here](#).

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

EPA again delays Pavillion groundwater investigation related to fracking WyoFile

01/10/2013

EPA again delays Pavillion groundwater investigation related to fracking

— January 10, 2013

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has again delayed action in its highly controversial investigation into contaminated drinking water in Pavillion, Wyoming.

WyoFile obtained a document scheduled to be published in the Federal Register on January 11, 2013, announcing the extension of the public comment period for EPA Region 8's "Investigation of Ground Water Contamination near Pavillion, Wyoming" to September 30, 2013.

Public comment was first initiated in December 2011.

Tanks hold natural gas condensate and mark the spot of producing gas wells in the Pavillion field, in Fremont County, Wyo., in the heart of the Wind River Indian Reservation. The Environmental Protection Agency said it found chemicals that are used in gas drilling in water wells near this site. (Abraham Lustgarten/ProPublica)

That draft report, released publicly in December 2011, alleged that chemicals commonly associated with hydraulic fracturing — or "fracking" — indeed contributed to contaminated drinking water in the tiny, rural farming community.

The report set off a firestorm of criticism from both Wyoming officials and Pavillion natural gas field operator EnCana Oil & Gas USA, taking aim at the EPA's methodology, data and conclusions. In the controversy, a scientific peer review required to finalize the draft report has been continually delayed.

This week's news of yet another delay further frustrated stakeholders on all sides of the issue, including some Pavillion area residents who believe the EPA's investigation — and conclusions mentioned in the draft report — is the most reliable information on the matter.

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

"What it really means for us is months and months of waiting and still being exposed to impacts that we've suffered all along and having no resolution," Pavillion area rancher John Fenton told WyoFile. "Go ahead and extend public comment, but allow the peer review go forward. I'm trying to find out who requested this."

A spokesman for EnCana Oil & Gas USA said the company was equally disappointed.

"This issue goes to our reputation and we take this very seriously and we don't beleive the issues in Pavillion are related to our oil and gas operation," EnCana spokesman Doug Hock told WyoFile. "It's a disservice to us and a disservice to people of Pavillion and to the state of Wyoming."

Hock said EnCana had prepared several third party reports from geologists, hydrologists and other experts to submit to EPA next week. The reports essentially are a critique of EPA's groundwater investigation, which EnCana believes has been proven scientifically invalid.

That question of validity, however, cannot be officially answered until — and unless — a peer review weighs in on the matter.

Jeffrey Locker stands next to a natural gas well behind his home near Pavillion. (Dustin Bleizeffer/WyoFile – click to enlarge)

The EPA issued this statement today; "During this time EPA will continue its public outreach activitiesincluding meeting with key stakeholders and posting additional technical information on the agency's website. This extension will allow the public additional opportunity to comment on EPA's draft report and the latest round of sampling conducted by EPA and USGS. The Agency will take into account new data, further stakeholder input, and public comment as it continues to review the status of the Pavillion investigation and considers options for moving forward."

In meantime, dozens of families are left without answers as to why their drinking water is fouled.

"We have all this work and it's not being allowed to continue on through this peer review process and come to some conclusion," said Fenton.

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

The state has pitched in money to provide cisterns as a temporary fix, although few homeowners have committed to having them installed because they still have to pay for water. The state has also launched planning efforts for a long-term water supply solution.

EnCana is still providing some water on a temporary basis. The company continues to operate about 145 natural gas wells in the Pavillion field, and says it has not performed any drilling or fracking operations since 2007. This past year, a potential buyer backed out of negotiations to purchase the field.

"That buyer decided, because of the ongoing issues with EPA, decided not to go through with that transaction," said Hock. "It's not a core asset for us."

— Dustin Bleizeffer is WyoFile editor-in-chief. Reach him at 307-577-6069 or dustin@wyofile.com. Follow Dustin on Twitter [@DBleizeffer](https://twitter.com/DBleizeffer).

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EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing -

Jan. 10 to 14

Environment Chief Resigns Chemical & Engineering News

01/10/2013

Lisa P. Jackson, administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency since shortly after President Barack Obama took office in 2009, is stepping down. Her resignation will take effect after the President's State of the Union address, which will occur sometime in late January or early February.

Jackson, the first chemical engineer and the first African American to lead EPA, joins a number of high-ranking Obama Administration officials who have announced their departures as the President gears up for his second term in office.

Jane Lubchenco will step down as head of the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton will also leave.

During her tenure, Jackson advocated for a number of critical policy changes. Some will have environmental and economic repercussions for years to come.

In 2009, Jackson determined that carbon dioxide and five other greenhouse gases are pollutants that threaten public health and welfare and thus need regulation under the Clean Air Act. In addition, she was the first EPA administrator to set out principles for a legislative overhaul of the 1970s-era law that governs the manufacture of commercial chemicals, the Toxic Substances Control Act.

The chemical industry has mixed views on Jackson's tenure at EPA.

"Jackson's EPA will be remembered as one of the least collaborative with industry stakeholders," says William E. Allmond IV, vice president of government and public relations at the Society of Chemical Manufacturers & Affiliates, a trade group.

"The chemical industry has faced increasing and unnecessary regulations under Jackson's watch in a time when the U.S. economy is struggling to get back on its feet."

A more tempered opinion comes from the American Chemistry Council, another industry trade association. "Although we did not always agree with Ms. Jackson on regulatory policy or objectives, she has been a committed advocate for health and environmental protection," the group noted in a statement.

Environmental advocates, state regulators, and Democrats in Congress are generally positive about Jackson's tenure. In addition to her decision on greenhouse gases, they point to regulations to curb mercury and other toxic air pollutants from coal-fired power plants as her key accomplishments.

Jackson did face a big political setback in 2011 when Obama blocked EPA from tightening national air quality standards for ground-level ozone.

President Obama is expected to nominate a new EPA chief in the coming weeks. Potential candidates include current Deputy Administrator Robert Perciasepe, who has served as Jackson's second-in-command, and Regina McCarthy, who heads the agency's air pollution program. Both are career bureaucrats with years of experience as environmental regulators at both the state and federal levels. Another name bandied about is California Air Resources Board Chair Mary D. Nichols.

Whomever Obama chooses, the new EPA administrator will oversee controversial matters such as regulation of greenhouse gas emissions from industrial facilities and hydraulic fracturing to extract natural gas. The Senate must confirm the President's nominee.

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

EPA Releases Update on Ongoing Hydraulic Fracturing Study Rock Products - Online

01/10/2013

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) provided an update on its ongoing national study currently underway to better understand any potential impacts of hydraulic fracturing on drinking water resources. Results of the study, which Congress requested EPA to complete, are expected to be released in a draft for public and peer review in 2014.

The update provided outlines work currently underway, including the status of research projects that will inform the final study. It is important to note that while this progress report outlines the framework for the final study, it does not draw conclusions about the potential impacts of hydraulic fracturing on drinking water resources, which will be made in the final study.

As the administration and EPA has made clear, natural gas has a central role to play in our energy future, and this important domestic fuel source has extensive economic, energy security, and environmental benefits. The study EPA is currently undertaking is part of EPA's focus to ensure that as the Administration continues to work to expand production of this important domestic resource safely and responsibly.

Among the information released are updates on 18 research projects and details on the agency's research approach as well as next steps for these ongoing projects and analyses. The update follows the public release, in November 2011, of the agency's final study plan, which underwent scientific peer review and public comment.

EPA has engaged stakeholders, including industry, to ensure that the study reflects current practices in hydraulic fracturing. EPA continues to request data and information from the public and stakeholders and has put out a formal request for information which can be accessed through the federal register.

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

Matt Damon's Promised Land Plays to Silly Fracking Stereotypes U.S. News & World Report

01/10/2013

Daniel Simmons is the director of state affairs at the Institute for Energy Research.

I was one of the brave few who saw Matt Damon's new movie Promised Land last week. The movie turned out to be enlightening, not for its exploration of the biggest development in energy in the last decade, but rather for the writers' and producers' view of business.

Anyone who has followed America's resurgent oil and natural gas production knows that the use of hydraulic fracturing and directional drilling has led to vast increases in domestic oil and natural gas production. The United States is now the world's largest natural gas producer and according to the International Energy Agency, the United States will become the largest oil producer within five years.

Hollywood is starved for original movie ideas and when the writers started working on Promised Land, they likely thought they had a great new villain in hydraulic fracturing. But it appears that reality intruded and the writers discovered that hydraulic fracturing isn't guilty of the crimes environmental activists have alleged.

[See a collection of political cartoons on energy policy.]

The movie's producers admitted they consulted the movie Gasland in preparation for making Promised Land. If you watch Gasland as a documentary, hydraulic fracturing looks to be truly scary. For example, Gasland shows people setting their drinking water on fire as it comes out of the tap, fish kills, and the former mayor of Dish, Texas claiming that natural gas production led to benzene air pollution in his city. But Gasland is not a documentary, it's a movie.

Gasland's claims are scary, but they aren't true, as Promised Land's researchers surely found out when they looked deeper into hydraulic fracturing's actual environmental track record. The reality is that hydraulic fracturing has been used for over 60 years in more than 1.2 million wells and there isn't a single confirmed case of groundwater contamination, according to the EPA.

The scare stories in Gasland are nothing more than scare stories. Gasland shows drinking water being set on fire on Fort Lupton, Colo., but according to the Colorado regulators, this is natural and not a result of natural gas production. The fish kill, according to EPA was the result of an algal bloom, and the Texas Department of State Health Services found that the only people in Dish, Texas with elevated levels of benzene were smokers.

[Read the U.S. News Debate: Is Fracking a Good Idea?]

Without a real villain in hydraulic fracturing, the writers of Promised Land were left to rely on a standard Hollywood villain—the corporation. Promised Land's villainous corporation, however, says little to nothing about oil and gas companies, but it says a lot about Hollywood.

In the movie, the natural gas company sends Matt Damon and Francis McDormand's characters to secure drilling leases, but does not bother to prepare them to answer questions from the public about hydraulic fracturing. In an early scene, a local high school teacher stumps Damon's character in a public meeting about drilling. Instead of having any real answers for the school teacher, Damon's character says that "I'm not the guy who has all the answers." Not only does Damon's character not have all the answers, he has no answers at all.

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

Any of us can be stumped by tough and unexpected questions, but for a representative of a natural gas company sent to engage the public not to be able to answer easily foreseeable questions about hydraulic fracturing and pollution issues is very unrealistic and bad screenwriting.

[See 2012: The Year in Cartoons.]

This shows us how the screenwriters feel about large corporations (hint: They don't like them, they're evil and out to hurt people...it's Hollywood, right?), but fails to say anything about the real issues involved with hydraulic fracturing. The screenwriters then insult the viewer by taking contradictory positions that the company is both incompetent and diabolically clever, in a twist late in the movie.

It's too bad that *Promised Land* didn't deal with real issues concerning domestic energy production and hydraulic fracturing, choosing instead to retread the well-worn Hollywood tactic of attacking business and capitalism. Technology is revolutionizing our energy outlook, creating jobs, and increasing our national security in a virtual revolution, but instead of dealing with the issues honestly, *Promised Land* plays to silly stereotypes and prejudices coupled with a vacuum of logic. Maybe that's why Matt Damon's movie raised only one fifth of the box office revenue last weekend that *Texas Chainsaw, 3D* enjoyed.

In a no-growth, no-jobs economy, films offering chainsaw slashings are apparently much preferable to the audience than those that slash the truth about America's energy revolution—the only growth industry in our nation.

Read Gregg Laskoski: U.S. Deserves Candor, Transparency From Refineries

Follow the U.S. News On Energy blog on Twitter.

Tags: energy, movies, energy policy and climate change, Hollywood

On Energy

Perspectives from all sides of the burning energy issues of the day. Follow it on Twitter @USNewsOnEnergy

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EPA Releases Update on Ongoing Hydraulic Fracturing Study Rock Products - Online

01/10/2013

EPA Releases Update on Ongoing Hydraulic Fracturing Study

Thursday, 10 January 2013 13:42

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) provided an update on its ongoing national study currently underway to better understand any potential impacts of hydraulic fracturing on drinking water resources. Results of the study, which Congress requested EPA to complete, are expected to be released in a draft for public and peer review in 2014.

The update provided outlines work currently underway, including the status of research projects that will inform the final study. It is important to note that while this progress report outlines the framework for the final study, it does not draw conclusions about the potential impacts of hydraulic fracturing on drinking water resources, which will be made in the final study.

As the administration and EPA has made clear, natural gas has a central role to play in our energy future, and this important domestic fuel source has extensive economic, energy security, and environmental benefits. The study EPA is currently undertaking is part of EPA's focus to ensure that as the Administration continues to work to expand production of this important domestic resource safely and responsibly.

Among the information released are updates on 18 research projects and details on the agency's research approach as well as next steps for these ongoing projects and analyses. The update follows the public release, in November 2011, of the agency's final study plan, which underwent scientific peer review and public comment.

EPA has engaged stakeholders, including industry, to ensure that the study reflects current practices in hydraulic fracturing. EPA continues to request data and information from the public and stakeholders and has put out a formal request for information which can be accessed through the federal register.

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

No contamination from fracking found in 2 Arkansas counties-USGS Chicago Tribune Collections

01/10/2013

* USGS sampled 127 wells in Fayetteville shale area

* Study shows fracking can be done safely, author says

* Draft EPA study linked fracking, water pollution in

Wyoming

WASHINGTON, Jan 9 (Reuters) - The U.S. government said it found no evidence that shale gas drilling had contaminated water in two Arkansas counties where concerns were raised about the drilling technique called hydraulic fracturing, or fracking.

The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) sampled 127 shallow domestic wells in Van Buren and Faulkner counties in the Fayetteville Shale area, where 4,000 wells have been drilled since 2004.

"It does show this can be done and done right with no impacts," Tim Kresse, one of the USGS study's authors and a water quality specialist with USGS, told Reuters.

Still, Kresse stressed that the results should not be used to draw conclusions about the safety of fracking around the country because geology varies widely from state to state.

Among other things, the USGS study assessed concentrations of chloride, a naturally occurring compound that would be one of the best indicators of water contamination by fracking fluids, Kresse said.

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

The researchers found that chloride concentrations in the 2011 samples were not higher than samples collected in nearby areas between 1951 and 1983.

Advances in fracking, which involves injecting a cocktail of water, sand and chemicals underground to extract fuel, have unlocked the nation's vast shale gas reserves.

But the boom in shale gas development has led to protests that the production may be polluting groundwater and air in places like Arkansas and Pennsylvania.

Responding to concerns about the possible hazards associated with fracking, the Obama administration has attempted to balance support for more gas drilling with calls to ensure that drilling is safe.

The USGS study should provide ammunition for oil and gas producers who have strongly disputed suggestions that fracking is responsible for fouling drinking water.

USGS also studied methane concentrations in 51 of the sampled wells and found that any methane detected was naturally occurring or could not be linked to the drilling.

A draft study released by the Environmental Protection Agency in 2011 linked fracking to water contamination in Pavillion, Wyoming, sparking a firestorm of debate, with state officials and drilling groups slamming the report.

The EPA retested the water in Pavillion in 2012 and has extended the public comment period on the report until Jan. 15.

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

The EPA is currently also conducting a long-term study on fracking and drinking water that is due to issue conclusions in 2014.

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

Lankford to look for efficiencies on energy subcommittee energybiz Insider

01/10/2013

Jan 9 - McClatchy-Tribune Regional News - James Coburn The Edmond Sun, Okla.

Congressman James Lankford's new House leadership role will allow him to strive for efficiencies in a broad number of government agencies.

Lankford announced his selection last week as the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform subcommittee chairman on EPA regulation of energy production, health care and entitlement reforms.

"It is the one committee that can go into any agency and examine are we following protocol process correctly," said Lankford, R-Edmond.

Lankford will evaluate safeguards to prevent fraud in Medicare as well as whether entitlements such as free cell phones provided by the government are beneficial in balance with fraud.

He will also be investigating whether the permitting process for hydraulic fracturing is being handled properly. This will involve the federal government's permitting process in what is a state's responsibility.

"It's not just oil and gas. It will be wind, bio and solar," Lankford said. "If it's energy production it will come through my committee."

Lankford said he is confident that energy companies are doing their best to produce energy safely for the country. There are risks with any type of manufacturing, Lankford said.

He cautioned that the EPA is preparing to attack energy production on water and air. The EPA was scheduled to release its water study in 2012.

"I have my suspicions as to why they failed to do that on schedule," Lankford said. "The second thing they're going after is the release of methane."

Lankford said he is confident the technology is in place for a safe and reliable source of energy derived from hydraulic fracturing, or "fracking." Some EPA estimates indicate that as much as 10 percent of the methane gas in the atmosphere is being released as a result of fracking.

"The model they use for the release of methane is a little absurd. If they release that much in the atmosphere, every amount they release in the atmosphere is lost money," Lankford said.

There will be only a small amount of released methane into the atmosphere, he said. Producers have assured him directly they are doing everything they can to capture the methane, he added.

"It's a reasonable thing to do for the protection of all Americans," Lankford said. "My statement is not that there's nothing that should be done for regulation. I am all for regulating an industry for safety and for consistent competition."

Lankford said he does not agree with arbitrary regulations that promote a single agenda other than an agenda of energy independence. The first achievable step is North American energy independence, he said.

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

"I think that is achievable in the next 10 years," Lankford said. "And then after that, we can purchase energy where we want to purchase energy. If it's cheaper in Brazil to buy it, we could, but we won't have to."

The subcommittee also deals with health care entitlements. Providers are taking a hit on Medicare. People on Medicare are frustrated when trying to find a physician who will take Medicare, Lankford said.

"The federal government is now so hard on providers that fewer doctors want to accept Medicare and fewer hospitals want to deal with it. And I think that's wrong," Lankford said.

jcoburn@edmondsun.com -- 341-2121

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**Rotary.org: The Rotarian
Rotarian - Online, The**

01/10/2013

Fracking by David W. Coffin (not for reuse)

Natural gas is a blend of hydrocarbon gases, primarily methane. Like oil and coal, it is a fossil fuel that can be refined to produce energy. Scientists believe fossil fuels are formed when the remains of plants, animals, and microorganisms are compressed under high pressure beneath the earth's surface for a long period. Unlike oil and coal, natural gas is considered clean burning; it produces lower levels of potentially harmful emissions.

Oil is created at lower temperatures than natural gas. Natural gas tends to be more abundant than oil as you go deeper into the earth, where the temperature increases. In the 1820s, scientists knew that large deposits of natural gas were embedded in shale, and commercial drilling was first attempted, with limited success.

Beginning in 1947, a process called hydraulic fracturing, or "fracking," was applied to limestone and sandstone deposits to extract natural gas. Fracking is also used to extract natural gas from shale; this is more difficult than extraction from limestone and sandstone. The method involves injecting a combination of sand, water, and chemicals into a well bore at high pressure, which fractures the rock and opens millions of cracks. Gas seeps through these cracks into a pipeline. Improvements to a technique called massive hydraulic fracturing, which was developed in the late 1970s, started the modern gas boom. In 1998, slick-water fracking (adding friction-reducing chemicals to water to increase the fluid flow) was introduced. Today, a new drilling method – high-volume horizontal hydraulic fracturing, or "hydrofracking" – is in use.

Shales now yield more than 25 percent of American natural gas resources, up from 2 percent in 2001. The U.S. Energy Information Administration estimates that the world has 6,622 trillion cubic feet of recoverable shale gas resources. China has the largest supply; the United States is second. Mexico and Canada also have large supplies, making North America the continent with the greatest shale gas resources. The largest shale gas formation in North America is the Marcellus Shale, the bulk of which is in Pennsylvania, Ohio, New York, and West Virginia.

Environmental concerns about fracking relate to its possible impact on the water supply. Wastewater associated with shale gas extraction can contain fracturing-fluid additives and chemicals including the carcinogen benzene and naturally occurring radioactive materials.

By 2009, the United States had 493,000 active natural gas wells across 31 states. About 90 percent used fracking to get more gas flowing. Although the Environmental Protection Agency supervises regulations for underground drinking water, states set regulations for fracking. Vermont is the only state that has banned fracking. In 2010, the EPA announced a \$1.9 million peer review study on the effect of fracking on water quality and public health, which may inform future policy decisions.

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

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EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

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EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

**Obama 2nd term: managing oil production boom
Worcester Telegram & Gazette - Online**

01/10/2013

Four years ago, President Barack Obama said his energy and environmental advisers would work to develop a “new hybrid economy” based on wind, solar, and other renewable energy sources. For his second term, Obama may end up assembling a team for a different task: How to manage the boom in U.S. production of oil and natural gas.

Lisa Jackson has announced her exit as head of the Environmental Protection Agency, and Energy Secretary Steven Chu, who faced congressional criticism over green-energy programs, could follow.

“When the Obama team came in the first go around, there was great hope that the president would be transformative and really try to shift the energy policy much more heavily towards renewables,” Charles Ebinger, an energy policy expert at the Brookings Institution in Washington, said in an interview.

Instead, the growth of hydraulic fracturing to drill for oil and gas in shale rock formations is offering a “unique opportunity to revitalize the American economy and reinvigorate American manufacturing,” Ebinger said.

Oil production is at its highest level in 15 years, and natural gas development is at record levels. That pushed prices down to a decade low last year, enticing chemical companies that rely on natural gas to build new factories in the U.S.

‘Paradigm Shift’

“The whole paradigm has shifted over the last four years,” Stephen Brown, a lobbyist for Tesoro Corp., which is based in San Antonio, Texas, said in an interview. The administration needs to “figure out how not to get in the way of this,” he said.

Ebinger said Obama should pick an Energy secretary, who can explain the benefits offered by natural gas development to a skeptical public.

“He needs a couple of people at the top who can go out and sell the message that we really are at a situation now where we can reduce our oil import dependency if we move to develop these unconventional resources,” he said. “I think he needs a salesman or a saleswoman.”

On the other side are environmentalists who want the U.S. to adopt stricter regulations to protect water resources and limit air pollution from “fracking.”

The Interior Department is developing the first rules for the drilling practice on federal lands to address some of those concerns as it also promotes oil and gas development as a source of economic growth.

Fracking Study

The EPA, meanwhile, plans to release its multi-year analysis of the potential risks of fracking in 2014. Margot Anderson, the executive director of the Energy Project at the Bipartisan Policy Center, a Washington-based group that says it promotes legislative consensus, said that study will probably determine the level of regulatory restrictions on fracking the administration pursues next term.

The oil industry hopes Obama chooses candidates who “are well versed in how an agency operates and what the agency

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

is capable of doing," Tesoro's Brown said.

"Hydraulic fracturing regulation done poorly would put the brakes on development going on here in this country," he said.

The emphasis for Obama's new energy and environmental team appears to be on seasoned insiders who understand the politics of rulemaking and how to negotiate with diverse constituencies.

Governor Gregoire

Washington Governor Christine Gregoire, whose term ends next week, is a candidate to replace Jackson at the EPA, seattlepi.com reported on its Web site, citing a "very private prediction from a very senior source in Washington's congressional delegation."

Gregoire won praise from environmental groups such as the Ocean Conservancy for commissioning a report on the risks of ocean acidification, a consequence of climate change, last year.

No offer has been made either formally or informally from the White House about any administration position, Gregoire's spokeswoman Karina Shagren said. "If conversations are happening, I'm not privy to those conversations," Shagren said.

Other candidates for the EPA include Bob Perciasepe, the agency's No. 2 official; Gina McCarthy, the assistant administrator of EPA for air pollution; and Kathleen McGinty, the former top environmental regulator for Pennsylvania, according to published reports.

Final Rules

The EPA's new administrator will largely be responsible for implementing regulations already in the works, including a series of final or proposed rules that will curb the use of coal to generate electricity.

With those rules in place "at this point you can't stop it," William Bumpers, a lawyer at Baker Botts LLP in Washington, said in an interview.

Former Senator Byron Dorgan, a North Dakota Democrat, is reportedly being considered as to replace either Chu or Interior Secretary Ken Salazar.

Neither Salazar nor Chu has announced his future plans.

Salazar today declined to say if he would remain at Interior, although he did signal he would like to stay on. "I have a lot of work to do," he told reporters, adding that he had no "personnel announcement" to make.

William Gibbons, an Energy Department spokesman, declined to comment on Chu's plans.

Chu's Legacy

Chu brought "real passion for the Obama's administration's long-term goals for clean energy and high-tech energy and really attracted top-flight people to come and work for the department," said Anderson, who was an adviser at the Energy Department under Chu.

Chu is a career scientist and co-winner of the Nobel Prize for physics.

Some Republicans in Congress came to view his leadership as tarnished by the Energy Department's endorsement in

EPA & Hydraulic Fracturing - Jan. 10 to 14

2009 of Solyndra LLC's \$535 million U.S. loan guarantee. The solar panel maker went bankrupt two years later.

Regardless of who is in charge, the energy outlook has shifted considerably since the start of Obama's first term in January 2009 when he sought to implement policies that as a candidate said could create 5 million green jobs in a decade.

The reality has fallen far short of that goal. The White House estimated in 2010 that 225,000 green jobs had been created.

Fiscal constraints will mean fewer resources to promote wind, solar and other environmentally friendly sources of power than the \$90 billion provided in the 2009 economic stimulus bill, Ebinger said.

"It's going to be very difficult for a major program to be supported fiscally by the Congress," Ebinger said.